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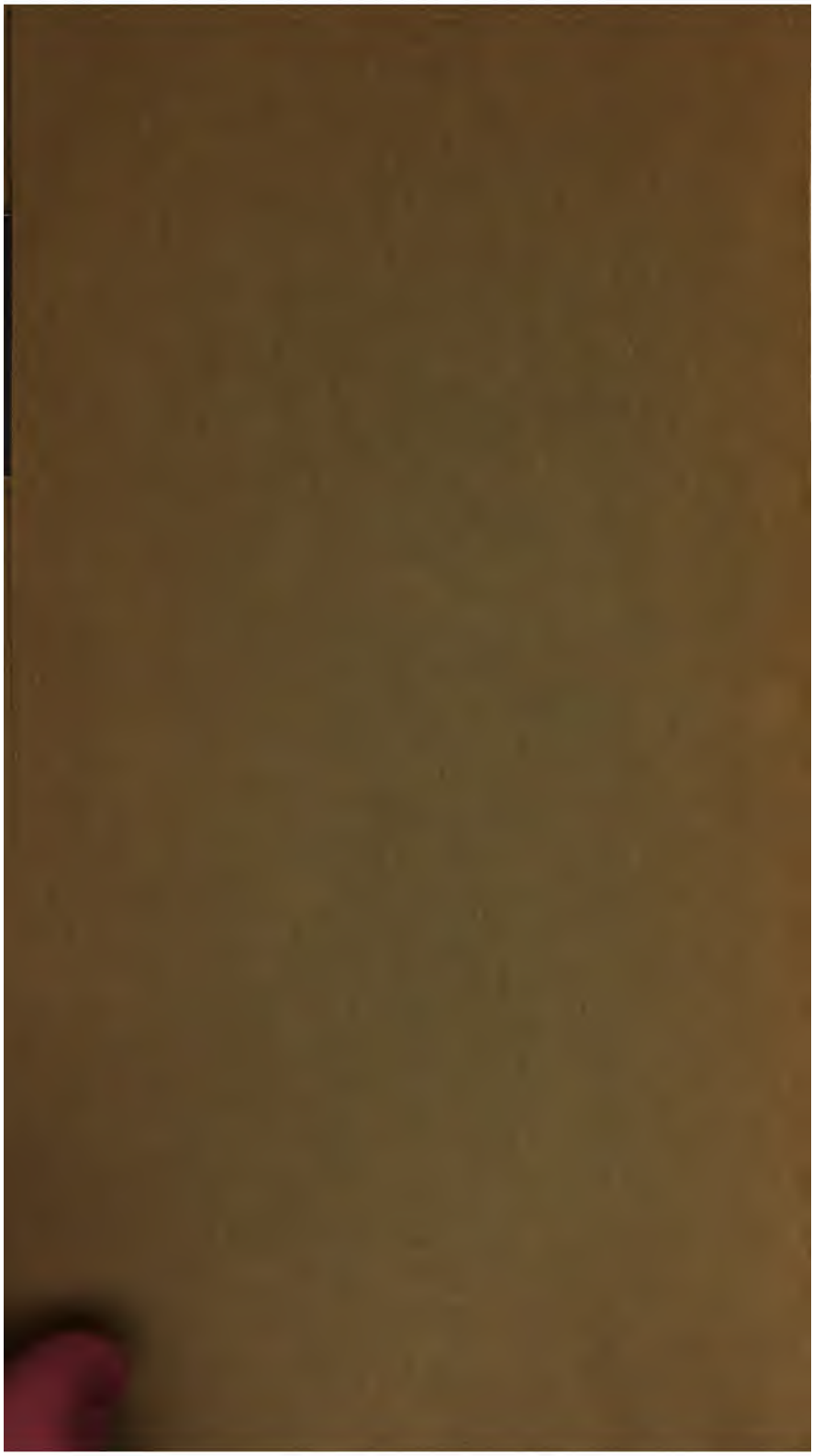


AN

APPENDIX

TO THE

GUIDE TO THE CHURCH;

IN

SEVERAL LETTERS;

IN WHICH THE PRINCIPLES ADVANCED IN THAT WORK ARE MORE FULLY MAINTAINED,

IN

ANSWER TO OBJECTIONS.

BY THE

REV. CHARLES DAUBENY,

ARCHDEACON OF SARUM.

"Speaking the Truth in Love." Eph. iv. 15.

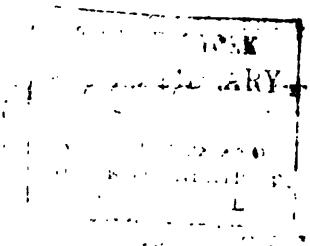
SECOND EDITION.

PRINTED FOR

F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD, LONDON;

BY R. CRUTTWELL, BATH.

1804.



PREFACE TO THE READER.

IT was the lamentation of the celebrated ERASMUS, that the eighth folio volume of his works ſhould be taken up in anſwers to objections that had been made to his former writings. His words on the occaſion were theſe: "Octavum occupent apologiæ. Me, miſerum! et hæ juſtum volumen efficient."

Conſidering the little that I have written, and the ſubject I have undertaken, I cannot forbear from lamenting, that there ſhould be a neceſſity for the publication of a ſecond volume, to maintain the doctrines advanced in my firſt. And having no deſire to engage in controverſy, (a ſpecies of writing, as it is generally managed, which is too apt to call into exerciſe thoſe qualities of the mind, which the Chriſtian religion was intended to bring under ſubjection)

I could have wiſhed, that the taſk of anſwering objections had fallen into other hands. Still pledged as I am by what has been already advanced, (and not without mature conſideration) I ſhould not, it is probable, ſtand acquitted by the public, were I to deſert a cauſe, which, however unequal to the undertaking, I am profeſſionally bound to ſupport.

Fully impreſſed with this idea, I throw myſelf on the indulgence of the Reader; in the hope that the intention of the author will compenſate for the defects of his performance. It may be proper, however, to obſerve, on the ſubject of the following ſheets, that it is not elegance of compoſition, ſo much as a correct and perſpicuous ſtatement of facts accompanied with correſpondent reaſoning, that is to be looked for in them; and that their merit (if they may pretend to any) conſiſts in this, that the matter contained in them is calculated to convey uſeful information to every well-diſpoſed mind. "It is enough for me (if I may ſpeak in the language of pious Biſhop TAYLOR) to be an under-builder in the houſe of GOD; and I glory in the employment; I labour in the foundations; and therefore the work needs no apology for being plain, ſo it be ſtrong and well laid." Should the learned reader think, as it is probable he may,

that the ſubject, in ſome parts, wants compreſſion; the unlearned one, for whoſe advantage I chiefly write, may feel himſelf indebted to its dilated form for that more particular information, which it was deſigned to leave on his mind: a conſideration which weighs heavier in my ſcale of eſtimation, than any degree of credit that might otherwiſe have accrued to myſelf. The honours which wit and learning may deſervedly acquire, from their exertion on their appropriate ſubjects, I ſhall never envy; ſatisfied, ſhould I be counted worthy to be numbered among thoſe writers, who, in a cauſe which every miniſter of the church ought to have at heart, ſhall be thought to have contributed, in any degree, to the eſtabliſhment of truth. Should the world be grown ſo old in error, as no longer to be in a diſpoſition to receive the truth, I have to lament the circumſtance. But, though in ſuch caſe I can have neither fame nor emolument to expect, there is ſtill ſomething far better than either, of which no honeſt man can be deprived; namely, that ſatisfaction, with which the conſciouſneſs of having diſcharged a duty, muſt ever be accompanied.

The ſubject here committed to the public is certainly of the moſt important kind; particularly ſo in the preſent day. In handling it, ſhould I ſo far

have ſucceeded, as by leaving conviction on any reader's mind, to make him a more regular, confirmed, and conſiſtent member of the church, than he otherwiſe might have been; I ſhall thank GOD, for having thought fit to make me, unworthy as I am, the inſtrument of doing ſome good, at a time when, confeſſedly, much good is wanted to be done. The moſt valuable return the reader can make, for the hours that have been dedicated to his ſervice, will be his earneſt prayer to GOD, that the writer of the book before him, after having endeavoured to guide others into the good and right way, may not himſelf be found in the number of thoſe who are loſt.

Bath, March 26, 1804.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

SIR,

TO controvert the opinions or doctrines of any ſect or party, or even to declare a man's own opinions, if they differ from thoſe of ſuch ſectariſts or partiſans, without cenſure, is what no author muſt expect; for, whilſt man continue in his preſent ſtate of imperfection, a diverſity of opinions muſt occaſionally give riſe to diſputes and diviſions. Theſe, as the beginning of evils, ought to be avoided; ſo far as may be conſiſtent with a proper regard for truth; becauſe they tend, more or leſs, to the breach of that charity which is a principal characteriſtic of the Chriſtian. On this account, to make uſe of the

remark of a judicious writer,* "an author ſhould avoid, as much as he can, replies and rejoinders; the uſual conſequences of which are loſs of time and loſs of temper;" conſidering that a controverſy with his own paſſions is the moſt profitable one in which a Chriſtian can be engaged.

Theſe conſiderations might have juſtified me in my firſt purpoſe to return no anſwer to the letters that have been addreſſed to me, on the ſubject of my late publication, did I not reflect that ſuch ſeeming inattention might be deemed inconſiſtent with the reſpect which I really feel for your character and ſtation in life. But as time is precious; and, with all my zeal to be uſeful in my generation, feeling conſcious of having abuſed too large a portion of it; I am concerned, where there is ſo much real work to be done in the Chriſtian world, to find myſelf engaged in an uſeleſs undertaking. For, upon reading over your letters, I ſee nothing new upon the ſubjects attempted to be maintained in them; nothing to which a full and complete anſwer has not, in my judgment, been repeatedly given. And if what with ſuch clearneſs of argument has heretofore been written upon the particular tenets of your creed, have not brought

* JORTIN.

conviction to your mind; I muſt poſſeſs far more confidence in myſelf than I really do, to imagine that any thing I ſhall ſay, will be able to produce that effect.

It was the obſervation, I think, of the excellent JOSEPH MEDE, "that ſome opinions are in ſome ſort fatal to ſome men, and therefore, I can, (ſays he) with much patience endure a man to be contrary-minded, and have no inclination to contend with him. There is more goes to perſuaſion, than reaſons and demonſtrations; and that is not in my power."

You, Sir, it is generally underſtood, have grown up in an habitual attachment to what is commonly known by the title of the *Calviniſtic* doctrine.

I, Sir, am no Calviniſt; at leaſt, in the ſenſe that, I think, you are a Calviniſt. The tenet of abſolute unconditional election, with all the dreadful conſequences that may fairly be deduced from it, appears to me to be a direct contradiction to the general tenor of ſcripture. As ſuch, I conſider myſelf bound not to teach it: at the ſame time I know it to be a tenet, which has been firmly held by ſome of the beſt Chriſtians, from the days of ST. AUGUSTIN down to the preſent time. This Calviniſtic tenet, therefore, is not the ſtandard, by which charity tells me I ought to form my judgment of Chriſtians; becauſe, in the

firſt place, it does not appear to belong to the eſſence of Chriſtianity; and in the ſecond, becauſe in the number of thoſe who have held, and thoſe who have held it not, will be found ſome of the moſt enlightened, exalted, and ſpiritual members of the Chriſtian church. It may be conſidered, therefore, as containing an opinion, the belief of which is not *eſſential* to ſalvation; and upon which Chriſtians may be allowed to differ, provided they break not the bond of charity in ſo doing. I may, however, I hope, without offence, be permitted to obſerve, that, even upon the ſuppoſition that it is true, it is an opinion on which all human ſpeculations are unprofitable; but ſhould it be falſe, they may be worſe than unprofitable; they may be highly prejudicial to the parties concerned, by leading them to build their hope of ſalvation upon an imaginary foundation, rather than on that ſure one, which has been laid down for them in the plain letter of ſcripture.

We cannot, without doing great injuſtice to their characters, ſuppoſe that, if Chriſtians of the moſt oppoſite ſentiments; ſuch, for inſtance, as CALVIN. and ERASMUS, Biſhops BABINGTON and BULL, and many others who might be mentioned; were to meet, to determine on thoſe eſſential articles of

faith neceſſary to diſtinguiſh the Chriſtian character; whatever difference of opinion they might maintain on ſome controverted points, they would all agree cordially in this one poſition, that without *charity* there could be no Chriſtianity.

Such, Sir, has ever been my ſentiment. Under the full impreſſion of it my book was written. The object of which was, according to the beſt of my judgment, to point out the plan which had been laid down by CHRIST and his Apoſtles for the preſervation of unity and fellowſhip among Chriſtian profeſſors. The work, according to the information given to the reader in the preface to it, was originally deſigned for private circulation. It was the reſult of long experience and much obſervation on the character and manners of a particular people, with whom it has pleaſed GOD that I ſhould be immediately connected. I fondly flattered myſelf, that theſe my peculiar circumſtances would, with perſons of candid minds, ſufficiently atone for the numerous defects of a performance, not written by one who had been in the habits of writing for the public; and I truſted the world was not yet grown ſo ungracious, as to reject the voluntary tender of a mite from a man, who might not have it in his power to make a more liberal offering.

The general tenour of your writings, Sir, has convinced me that we have both one object in view; namely, the promotion of GOD's honour, and the ſalvation of our fellow-creatures.

We may be miſtaken in the methods we have adopted for our purpoſe. But this ſurely furniſhes no reaſon why harſh cenſures ſhould be pronounced on either of us; for, though there may be inſtances where even involuntary ignorance may be chargeable with guilt; yet, where the intention is ſincere, GOD, we are given to underſtand, accepts "according to what a man hath, not according to what he hath not."

As a pious and exemplary Chriſtian, I look up to you, Sir, with reſpect; I could almoſt add, veneration; for I cannot but venerate a man, who, in the midſt of great worldly conſideration, attends to the firſt and moſt important duties of life. You appear to look down upon me with pity, if not with contempt; as a good moral man, perhaps, but no Chriſtian.

Now, though I muſt think you have not done me juſtice in your publication, I ſtill have to thank you for the occaſion it has furniſhed me with, of reviewing what I have written; and thereby guarding againſt thoſe concluſions, which either do not neceſſarily follow from the premiſes laid down, or at leaſt are con-

ſequences which the author did not foreſee would be drawn from them.

Knowing that man has no pretenſions to infallibility, I ſhall, I truſt, be at all times ready to bow in obedience to rational conviction; and thankful to the perſon who may undertake to produce it. The object before me is the proſecution and advantage of truth, in the way that leadeth unto peace. At the ſame time to make uſe of the words of GREGORY NAZIANZEN, "Non ſtudemus paci in detrimentum veræ doctrinæ, ut facilitatis et manſuetudinis famam colligamus."

There are points upon which, it is to be expected, miniſters of the church muſt poſſeſs ſome decided opinion; and which, if they act conſiſtently with their character, they cannot look upon as ſubjects of indifference. If upon theſe points they ſpeak as they ought to ſpeak, it does not follow from thence that they mean to pronounce ſentence on every Chriſtian who may differ from them in opinion. Whilſt they diſcharge their conſciences by keeping back no part of that truth which they think they have received, leſt they "ſuffer ſin on their brethren;" they at the ſame time leave the judgment in all caſes to that Being, who, knowing the degree of every man's underſtanding, and the circumſtances of his condition,

is alone qualified to pronounce on the innocence or criminality of his conduct; by determining how far the error of his head has been occasioned by the corruption of his heart.

With respect to points which are not clearly revealed, and on which some of the best of men have differed in opinion, the less that is said on them the better. Boldness of assertion, except in matters of clear revelation, is not so much an argument of the truth of a proposition, as of something else. To such points, the saying of ZENOPHANES in VARRO is applicable—"*Hominis est hæc opinari, DEI scire.*" And though I feel as natural a desire for knowledge, perhaps, as most men, yet there are some subjects on which I think it prudent to say, with ST. AUGUSTIN, "*Magis eligo cautam ignorantiam confiteri, quam falsam scientiam profiteri.*"

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

&c.

LETTER II.

SIR,

YOUR firſt letter profeſſes to treat of the original conſtitution of Church Government. On this ſubject I ſhould have hoped there could have been no difference of opinion between two perſons avowing their ſincere attachment to the church of England, in doctrine, in conſtitution, and in diſcipline; and believing her to be the *moſt pure apoſtolical church* on earth, which is the reaſon given by yourſelf, in page 5, for your "*communicating with her, and her only.*"

But, Sir, it ſhould ſeem that you are not ſo perfectly ſettled in your judgment on this point, as the above declaration would lead us to ſuppoſe. I cannot otherwiſe account for your bringing forward all thoſe hackneyed objections to the conſtitution of the church eſtabliſhed in this country, which have been ſo re-

peatedly done away by writers properly acquainted with the ſources from whence they have been induſtriouſly drawn. By diſſenters we expect to hear the moſt made of ſuch objections: they are the weapons of their warfare; weapons which have always been employed in defence of their ſeparation. But when a profeſſed member of the Church of England brings theſe objections forward, and details them in order before his reader; thereby throwing, as it were, a weight into the ſcale, oppoſite to that in which he is ſuppoſed to have previouſly thrown his own opinion; the reader will be apt to think, that there is ſo much ſtrength in the cauſe, which the writer profeſſes not to eſpouſe, that it is a matter of little conſequence to which ſide his deciſion leans.

Now, though I perfectly agree with the Divine you have quoted, that "Theology is every man's concern; and that it is his duty to ſtudy it according to his abilities and opportunity:" that it ſhould not be confined to the cloiſter of the monk, or to the retirement of the profeſſional Divine, becauſe religion is every man's buſineſs: I yet perſuade myſelf that, both you and Dr. KNOX will agree with me in thinking, that a writer ſhould make himſelf acquainted with a ſubject, before he commits himſelf on it to the

public. It was a remark of ST. JEROM, not inapplicable, I think, to the times in which we live, that proficients in all occupations are content to learn of their maſters. The knowledge of the ſacred ſcripture is the only knowledge, in which every one thinks himſelf qualified to be his own inſtructor. "This, the prattling old woman, the doting old man, the babbling ſophiſter, and, generally, all men preſume they have acquired: tearing the ſcripture in pieces in their attempt to teach, before they have learnt it."*

This remark, ſo far as it reſpects *theology*, certainly does not apply to you, Sir; but if it be extended to the knowledge of church hiſtory, I am inclined to think, from the ſpecimen before me, that in ſome conſiderable degree it does. For had you acquired a perfect acquaintance with thoſe original records, from which alone authentic information upon this ſubject is to be derived, I cannot help thinking that no ſmall portion of your firſt letter would have been

* "Abſque Doctore non poſſunt eſſe quod cupiunt. Quod medicorum eſt, promittunt medici; tractant f lia fabri. S a Scripturarum ars eſt quam ſibi paſſim omnes vendicant. Hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus ſenex, hanc ſophiſta verboſus, anc univerſi præſumunt, lacerant, docent, antequam diſcunt."—JEROM. Ep. ad PAULINUM.

unwritten. But as you have thought proper to write it, the reſpect due to your character and ſtation forbids its being paſſed over unanſwered.

Suppoſing, then, that I ſhould admit your alluſion to the gold and the temple which ſanctifieth the gold to be in itſelf a juſt one, yet muſt I think it to be not ſtrictly applicable to the caſe under conſideration; becauſe Chriſtians are not called upon to determine, which is of *moſt conſequence*, the outward polity of the church, or its ſacred verities; but to receive them both, as coming from GOD: and not to attempt to put aſunder what GOD for wiſe reaſons has joined together. So long, therefore, as you allow that the outward polity of the church was inſtituted *for the ſake of the ſacred verities*; you allow all that is required; for the obvious concluſion from theſe premiſes is, that the maintenance of the outward polity of the church is ſtill neceſſary for the preſervation of the ſame object for which it was originally inſtituted; unleſs it can be proved that the circumſtances of the church and the world are ſo altered, as to render this gracious proviſion for the ſecurity of the faith unneceſſary.

The alluſion made uſe of on this occaſion in my book appears to me to correſpond more ſtrictly with

the preſent ſubject. On the authority of ſcripture, I call the church the *candleſtick;* the doctrine, the *light:* the former made for the purpoſe of containing and ſupporting the latter. Now I preſume, Sir, you would not think that man to be the wiſeſt of men, or that he took the ſureſt method to preſerve his light, who ſhould throw the candleſtick away, and ſtick the candle againſt the wall or on his table; on the conſideration, that the candleſtick was of leſs value than the light, for whoſe ſake alone it was made.

To make uſe of another ſcriptural analogy; the church is called the *pillar* and *the ground of the truth;* not only becauſe the church teaches it, but becauſe ſhe ſupports and preſerves it, by that authority with which CHRIST has inveſted her for that purpoſe. The advantage which the Jew had over the Gentile under the old diſpenſation, conſiſted in his being a member of that church, to which the oracles of GOD had been entruſted, Rom. iii. 2. In like manner the advantage which the Chriſtian enjoys under the new diſpenſation conſiſts in his being a member of that church, to which the Goſpel revelation has been entruſted as *a ſacred depoſit* by JESUS CHRIST; for the purpoſe of preſerving which, as much as might be, from corruption and error, (that the end CHRIST

had in view in the delivery of it, might be carried into as complete effect as the circumſtances of the world would admit) the ſword of diſcipline and authority, commonly called the *power of the keys*, was committed by him to the governors of it.

Granting then that GOD does nothing in vain, a poſition which, it is preſumed, will not be controverted; it follows from the foregoing premiſes, that the preſervation of the faith and doctrine of the church depends, under GOD, upon the proper exerciſe of this power; and conſequently on the ſupport of that government which was committed to the church, as a viſible ſociety, for the proper management of its concerns. When either the power entruſted to the governors, for the edification of the church is not duly exerciſed, (a conſideration which made ST. CYPRIAN ſay, "quam periculoſum ſit in rebus divinis, ut quis à jure ſuo et poteſtate recedat;") or when the government of the church is deſtroyed; then, a door being opened for errors and hereſies of every kind, the object which CHRIST had in view in the eſtabliſhment of the church on earth is in a great degree fruſtrated. The doctrine of the church then, it will be allowed on all hands, is eſſential to the object of its eſtabliſhment. But the go-

vernment of the church is alſo eſſential to it as a ſociety; for without that no ſociety can poſſibly exiſt. And without the exiſtence of ſuch a ſociety as the viſible church, the true faith will not long be preſerved in the world.

That legion of hereſies which ſprung up in this country on the abolition of epiſcopacy in the laſt century will give weight, I truſt, to the foregoing conſideration; and induce you to conclude, that the *external polity* of the church is a matter of *eſſential* importance, conſidered as GOD's own plan for the advancement and ſecurity of the great object He had in view, in revealing himſelf to the world; and conſequently that a compariſon drawn between two propoſitions in themſelves equally true, by which an incautious reader may be led to give a preference to the one at the expence of the other, may do injury to that cauſe, which you, as a Chriſtian, muſt wiſh to promote.

I paſs on, Sir, to what is ſaid, page 3d, reſpecting our *Eſtabliſhment;* in which I perfectly agree with you, that "all her faithful ſons may admire her outward ſymmetry and beauty, without opening the mouth of cenſure againſt thoſe who do not exactly ſee with our eyes."

I flattered myſelf that I had ſpoken as charitably on this ſubject as you yourſelf could have wiſhed, when I ſaid, page 403, that "if the eſtabliſhment of the church of CHRIST be true, the Diſſenter from from it is in an error; if his error be unavoidable, we rejoice to think that he is in the hands of a merciful GOD; but ſhould his ſeparation from the church be derived from evil cauſes, be it remembered, that that Being who has eſtabliſhed nothing in vain, is not to be mocked."

The object of my book was to point out the nature and conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, and the evil conſequences derivable from a ſeparation from it; not to condemn or cenſure the parties who ſeparate. Their cauſe is left with GOD, who is alone qualified to judge of it.

Should any unguarded expreſſions, therefore, occur in my book, which may have given birth to the foregoing obſervation, as addreſſed to me; I ſhould have hoped, they would have been interpreted with that candour which is due to an author, who profeſſes to write from a moſt charitable regard to the ſpiritual welfare of his fellow-Chriſtians. I have only farther to obſerve, Sir, as to this point, (ſince I cannot find that the law which tolerates Diſſenters in

their ſeparation from the church, does at all forbid us to give the reaſons for our attachment to her communion;) that at a time when every ſectariſt is permitted, in contempt of law and order, to write with the moſt marked, not to ſay indecent and inſolent, cenſure upon the government of that church which is eſtabliſhed in his country; if the faithful ſons of the church may not defend that ground which they are profeſſionally called on to maintain, without being charged with conſequences which may tend to throw a ſtumbling-block in the way of their honeſt endeavours; the members of the church of England appear in this reſpect to be in a worſe ſituation than thoſe of the conventicle or meeting-houſe. But, Sir, the reaſon you ſubjoin for our not ſpeaking too decidedly on the ſubject of the church eſtabliſhment, becauſe the greateſt and beſt of men, after the labour of many years, are no nearer an agreement on it than they were at the beginning; and that after all the diſputes that have been carried on between Churchmen and Diſſenters, it ſtill remains (in your own ſomewhat coarſiſh phraſe) a drawn battle; is what I am ſorry to hear a Churchman advance, and what I believe will by no means be admitted by any perſon acquainted with the true ſtate of the caſe.

The church of CHRIST under the Goſpel is now in its eighteenth century. For upwards of fifteen centuries of that period there was no diſpute on the ſubject of its *government*. That was confeſſedly and univerſally *epiſcopal*. The firſt Preſbyterian church that was ever heard of in the world, was ſet up by JOHN CALVIN at Geneva, in the year 1541. From this period the controverſy between Epiſcopal and Preſbyterian government dates its riſe. It is much to be lamented, indeed, that ſuch a controverſy ever took place. But whoever will give himſelf the trouble to mark fairly the progreſs of it, will determine, that whenever the Diſſenters have brought their forces (if I may adopt your phraſeology) to a *pitched battle* with the Churchmen, they have never failed to be beaten out of the field. If their moſt famous leaders, *BLONDEL* and *SALMASIUS*, have been unable to maintain their ground, we may ſafely ſay, the few advantages which may ſeem to have been occaſionally gained againſt the church eſtabliſhment, have been gained by ſlight ſkirmiſhing parties; who, by ſudden irruptions, have ſurpriſed ſome of the church troops ſleeping on their poſts, or unprovided with arms to repel the attack. But I will venture to ſay, that no Diſſenter of learning and character will

chooſe to enter the field againſt a Churchman of the ſame deſcription, on the ſubject of church government; becauſe he knows that field of controverſy has been well fought over, and that there is not a poſt to be found in it that is long tenable againſt a powerful adverſary. I believe you would not deem this to be a bold aſſertion, if you had read, as I am inclined to think you have not, the Diſſertations of the learned HAMMOND againſt BLONDEL, together with the writings of the celebrated LESLEY, or even the Diſcourſe of Biſhop POTTER.

You are not to be informed, Sir, that at a noted period of our hiſtory, when Preſbytery had gained the aſcendancy in this kingdom, and every argument that could be muſtered was brought forth by its champions againſt Epiſcopacy, then trodden under foot; that excellent Chriſtian and ſound Churchman, CHARLES I. a layman, without the aſſiſtance of books or papers, engaged in ſingle controverſy with the renowned Scotch Preſbyter *HENDERSON;* who was placed by the Parliament at the head of the commiſſion for the defence of the Preſbyterian cauſe; and made him retire out of the field.

The defeat which he received, or a conviction of the badneſs of the cauſe he had eſpouſed, is ſuppoſed

to have had ſuch effect upon the ſpirits of this veteran divine, that the hiſtorian reports him to have died of grief, and broken-hearted, ſoon after he departed from his Majeſty. See CLARENDON, book x. page 31. "It was credibly reported," ſays the learned HEYLIN, "that HENDERSON's being worſted in the controverſy threw him into a deep melancholy, which ended in a mortal diſorder." Hiſt. of Preſb. page 477. "Some ſay that HENDERSON died a convert to his Majeſty, and that he did him the juſtice of an extraordinary character for managing a debate of this nature." See COLLIER, vol. ii. page 848. However this be, the conduct of the Parliamentary commiſſioners furniſhes the moſt convincing proof of the King's having gained the victory; for, ſeeing their veteran leader overcome, they declined engaging further in the controverſy. If you ſuppoſe that Preſbyterian troops will not, even after they have been often and completely defeated, rally again, and return to the charge, permit me to ſay you are unacquainted with their character and temper. To quit your military alluſion, Preſbyterians may be convinced and convicted, but on the ſubject of church matters they are not to be ſilenced. They have a cauſe to defend which muſt not be given up. They

have committed themſelves, and muſt proceed. "Veſtigia nulla retrorſum." Arguments, therefore, which have been again and again diſproved, will be brought forward again.* Diſprove them as often as you pleaſe, you will find them as often repeated; on this known principle, that a ſtory, however ill-founded in itſelf, gains ſome credit with ſome people every time it is told. And when we conſider, that at leaſt nine-tenths of the world are totally indifferent about the *truth*, and of the remaining tenth much the greater part are unqualified to examine into it; we ſhall conclude, that this is an advantage not to be deſpiſed by thoſe, whoſe object it is at all events to carry their point. I do not mean to ſay that this mode of conduct is peculiarly characteriſtical of Diſſenters; I fear it is too general in the world, to be confined to men of any particular claſs or profeſſion. Thoſe of the moſt upright intentions and of the beſt underſtandings,

* The reader may find a moſt ſtriking ſpecimen of this repetition of old arguments in Profeſſor CAMPBELL's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, lately publiſhed; who has detailed, nearly in the ſame order and language, ſome of thoſe apparently material proofs, which had been brought forward a century before his publication made its appearance, without at the ſame time taking the leaſt notice of the anſwer by which thoſe proofs had been decidedly and convincingly ſet aſide at that time.

when they have committed themſelves in a cauſe, have been known, I am ſorry to ſay, to go any lengths rather than tread back their ground. Their honour and character they feel pledged for the maintenance of what they have once advanced. They will therefore wilfully ſhut their eyes againſt the light, rather than be reduced to the neceſſity of confeſſing that they who were *once blind*, at length ſee clearly. To make uſe of a vulgar phraſe, and vulgar alluſion, they will die hard, rather than confeſs. Were it not foreign to the ſubject, I could furniſh you, Sir, from my own experience, with one of the moſt notorious inſtances of this kind, that is perhaps to be produced.

You will not, I truſt, think it to be an unneceſſary treſpaſs on your time, if, before I proceed to the main ſubject of your firſt letter, I paſs a ſhort remark on the alluſion contained in your 4th page, which appears more calculated to miſlead an incautious reader, than to illuſtrate the poſition to which it is applied. "The church," Sir, you ſay, "is the LORD's vineyard. He has commanded in his wiſdom that this vineyard ſhould be fenced about, and ſeparated from the world by a wall of defence; that no inroads or encroachments might be made in it by thoſe thieves or depredators who would break in or

climb over." The figure by which the church under the Goſpel is here repreſented, is borrowed from the application that is made of it to the church under the law; where the Prophet, in the fifth chapter of ISAIAH, denounceth the judgment which GOD had determined to execute upon a corrupted church. In reference to this denunciation by the prophet, our LORD, addreſſing himſelf to the Jewiſh people, delivers the parable which we meet with in the fourth chapter of ST. MATTHEW; where he deſcribes the Jewiſh church as a vineyard, which a certain houſholder had planted and hedged about, and let out to the prieſts under the law, to dreſs and cultivate. And when GOD's ſervants, the prophets, were ſent to examine into the ſtate of this vineyard, ſome were killed, others ſtoned. At length, in the fulneſs of time, the Son and Heir of the Houſholder came in perſon: Him the huſbandmen caught and ſlew; the conſequence of which wicked proceeding was, that the Lord of the vineyard deſtroyed the murderers, and let out his vineyard to other huſbandmen. He did not, it muſt be obſerved, deſtroy the vineyard, but only put the management of it in other hands. Nor was the wall of defence, by which the vineyard was ſeparated from the world, pulled down, and the

vineyard thrown open; but only the maintenance of the wall, together with the cultivation of the inclosure, committed to *different workmen.*

By the *wall*, I preſume, is to be underſtood that conſtitution and government of the church, whether under the law or under the Goſpel, by which the church, as the peculiar property of GOD, is ſeparated from the world. This conſtitution, I conceive, is poſſeſſed of thoſe characteriſtic marks, by which it may be as perfectly aſcertained under the Chriſtian, as under the Jewiſh diſpenſation. Our SAVIOUR informs us, that he came not to deſtroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them; not to ſet up a new religion, but to perfect the old. And the ground upon which the divinity of the firſt ages of the church was built, as may be ſeen at large in the writings of JUSTIN MARTYR, and other primitive writers, was this—that Judaiſm was myſtical Chriſtianity;* and that the temple œconomy was perfected under the Goſpel. In conformity with which idea, and with the view of eſtabliſhing the dignity and character of the Chriſtian prieſthood, the analogy

* The Preface to the "Caſe of Infant Baptiſm" will give the reader much ſatisfactory information on this ſubject. See "London Caſes," No. 15.

between the miniſters of the law, and thoſe of the Goſpel, was ſo frequently drawn. What therefore you proceed to ſay reſpecting the wall of GOD's vineyard, by which it is ſeparated from the world; that "whether it was round or ſquare, of brick or ſtone, is no where aſcertained;" appears to me calculated to put a wild idea into the reader's head, by leading him to conclude, that the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church has received no particular form or eſtabliſhment whatever; a poſition, which I preſume you, as a Churchman, could not mean to advance.*

You proceed to ſay, "whatever be the ſhape or quality of the wall, it was not to be daubed with untempered mortar." Now, Sir, though you appear to have introduced ſome confuſion into your metaphor, by paſſing from the *wall* or outward form of the church, the original object of its application, to the *mortar*; by which I preſume is meant the *doctrine*

* It is an obſervation of the late Mr. JONES on Satan's temptation in the wilderneſs, that he "ſeparated the word *ſtone* from its metaphorical meaning, to change the true ſenſe of the promiſe, and promote his own malicious intention. They are guilty of a like error, who wilfully ſeparate the edifice of the church from its ſpiritual relation to GOD, and conſider it merely as a pile of ſtone and mortar, that they might lightly regard all that belongs to it."

JONES's Works, vol. iii. p. 213.

preached in it; and though I diſcover no analogy between the preachers of the Goſpel, (the weapons of whoſe warfare are ſpiritual, not carnal) and the material builders of the ſecond temple; who, as we read, were obliged, when engaged in their work, to be prepared with an offenſive weapon to reſiſt the attack of threatening enemies who ſurrounded them; yet, as I perfectly agree with you in the idea meant to be conveyed, that the doctrine of the preacher ought to tend to the edification of his hearers; I will not take up time in diſputing about the ſtrict propriety of the dreſs in which it is clothed.

I now paſs on to the main ſubject of your letter. The three poſitions with which you ſay I ſet out in my work, and which meet the reader in every part of it, are theſe:

Firſt, That the original inſtitution of church government, by CHRIST and his Apoſtles, conſiſted of three diſtinct orders among the clergy, viz. biſhops, prieſts, and deacons.

Second, That in no caſe whatever the external polity of the church may be altered.

Thirdly, That all, who are out of the pale of the church thus eſtabliſhed, have no promiſe of ſalvation, but muſt be left to the *uncovenanted mercies of* GOD.

The firſt of theſe poſitions, it is moſt certainly one profeſſed object of my book to maintain; and I ſee no reaſon, from any thing that has been advanced againſt it, to tread back my ground. And though I do not think it is in my power to eſtabliſh the poſition more firmly than I have done already, yet, Sir, as you profeſs yourſelf to be ſincerely attached to the conſtitution of the Church of England, and no *voluntary* ſchiſmatic; I ſhall hope that what I may ſtill ſay on this ſubject, in anſwer to the objections brought againſt it, may produce ſome good effect.

With this view it will be proper to give an anſwer to thoſe Preſbyterian arguments, which have been brought together, for the ſtrange purpoſe of invalidating a poſition, which you yourſelf, if I underſtand you right, profeſſedly maintain.

The ground upon which the poſition reſpecting the original inſtitution of church government was built in my book, was briefly this: That our SAVIOUR did, after his reſurrection, deliver a commiſſion to his eleven diſciples relative to the government of his church; and that the manner in which this commiſſion was to be carried into effect, is to be aſcertained by the ſubſequent practice of the Apoſtles: on the ſuppoſition, that our SAVIOUR would not

fail to accompany the delivery of ſo important a charge with the information neceſſary for the parties entruſted with it. But even admitting, what is more than we are bound to admit, that particular information reſpecting church government was not delivered by our SAVIOUR to his Apoſtles, yet, when it is conſidered that the Apoſtles were forbid to enter on the diſcharge of their commiſſion till they had received the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe office it was "to lead them into all truth;" we are authorized to conclude, that whatever form of government the Apoſtles agreed to eſtabliſh in the church, if not expreſsly communicated to them by CHRIST in perſon, muſt be conſidered as eſtabliſhed under the direction of the *Holy Spirit*.

Thus far, I preſume, it will be admitted, that the poſition before us ſtands upon firm ground.

But a difference of opinion has ariſen in the world, from different interpretations of the Apoſtolic writings, on the ſubject of church government. What ſtep then ſhall wiſe and prudent men take for clearing up the difficulty? There is but one that appears equal to the occaſion, and that has been taken; namely, an appeal to the teſtimony of thoſe perſons who lived *with the Apoſtles;* in whoſe authentic writings, if

any paſſages can be found which ſpeak decidedly and authoritatively on thoſe points, which the ſuppoſed ambiguous language of the Apoſtles may have left uncertain, the validity of evidence drawn from ſuch writings muſt, it is preſumed, be admitted as competent to the determination of the diſpute. For, as it is obſerved in my ſecond Diſcourſe, if it can be ſuppoſed that thoſe who lived with the Apoſtles, and exerciſed the office they had received in the church by virtue of their appointment, and in ſome meaſure under their ſuperintendance, could deviate from the plan laid down by the Apoſtles, who were conſidered as acting under the immediate inſpiration of the Holy Spirit; or that the immediate diſciples of the Apoſtles did not know the minds of their maſters; or if it be imaginable that the whole world ſhould, immediately after the death of the Apoſtles, conſpire together to ſeek themſelves, and not the things of JESUS CHRIST; to erect a government of their own deviſing, not ordained by CHRIST, not delivered by his Apoſtles, and to relinquiſh a Divine foundation, and the Apoſtolic ſuperſtructure, which, if it were at all, was a part of our Maſter's will; we may ſuppoſe and imagine any thing; and there is no ground left, on which any concluſive reaſoning on

the ſubject can be built. The two primitive writers produced on this occaſion, and upon whoſe teſtimony, ſhould it be required, I am contented to reſt the whole weight of this cauſe, are, *Clemens Romanus* and *Ignatius*. The former, one of the firſt biſhops, and a fellow-labourer with St. Paul; the latter, a diſciple of St. John. Proof, drawn from ſuch ſources, is the beſt of which the ſubject in queſtion is capable; and is indeed much ſtronger than any, on which many hiſtorical facts of great moment have been and are received. It is, therefore, that proof with which every reaſonable man will remain ſatisfied.

After having, in the thirteenth and fourteenth pages of your book, ſaid ſomething about the regular ſucceſſion of biſhops, and the fate of Uzza, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; of the particular circumſtances of whoſe caſe you do not ſeem to have formed a juſt conception; after having ſaid ſomething about the Pope, the titular biſhops in this kingdom, and the nonjuring biſhops, which have nothing to do with the ſubject in hand; you conclude by telling me, that you will leave me in peaceable poſſeſſion of all my quotations, from the time of Ignatius down to the Rev. Mr. Law.

Now, Sir, there are two ways in which this conceſſion may be underſtood. You leave me in peaceable poſſeſſion of my quotations; either becauſe you are ſenſible that the force of them is irreſiſtible; or, that being of no weight or moment in determining the point in queſtion, they are, on that account, beneath your notice. For my own part, I feel perfectly ſatisfied in taking advantage only of part of your conceſſion. In granting me the authority of CLEMENS and IGNATIUS, you put me in poſſeſſion of ground which is not to be ſhaken. And, though I do not mean to be underſtood, that the authority of ſubſequent writers upon the ſubject of the church eſtabliſhment is to be deſpiſed; yet, as I conſider their authority to ſtand on the *original* foundation, time need not to be waſted in drawing your attention to thoſe different parts of the ſuperſtructure, which have from time to time been raiſed upon it. As you have (and I think unneceſſarily) introduced the *nonjuring* clergy, you will permit me, Sir, to ſay a ſhort word on their ſubject, before I paſs on; becauſe I have always been taught to ſee thoſe perſons in ſuch a light, as to make me wiſh that their names ſhould never be mentioned but with becoming reſpect. When I conſider, that among the nonjuring clergy

are to be found ſome of the moſt pious, moſt learned, and moſt conſcientious Divines that ever adorned the church of England; I cannot help thinking, that the government would have gained more in honour than it would have loſt in ſecurity, had ſuch men been permitted to have remained in poſſeſſion of their preferments. But, admitting that policy demanded that the nonjuring clergy ſhould be deprived; you will obſerve, Sir, they were deprived of thoſe ſecular poſſeſſions which the church had derived from her connexion with the ſtate. Their offence, if it may be called by even ſo harſh a name, was of a *political* nature; their puniſhment correſponded to it. They offended againſt the ruling powers; they, in conſequence, loſt their patronage. But, can it be neceſſary to remind you, all the rights, dignities, and emoluments which the prieſthood derives from the piety and patronage of civil rulers, are quite diſtinct from that ſpiritual commiſſion, by which the clergy adminiſter the affairs of CHRIST's kingdom. Of this commiſſion they could not be deprived by *civil* rulers, becauſe it had been received from an higher authority. The office, therefore, which the nonjuring clergy held in the Chriſtian church, was preciſely the ſame; and every act of it as valid, ab-

ſtractedly conſidered, after their deprivation, as it was before; what they had been deprived of being only thoſe contingent circumſtances of emolument and honour, which have no neceſſary connexion with the miniſterial commiſſion.

Your miſtake upon this ſubject appears to have ariſen from your confounding two things in their nature quite diſtinct, and not neceſſarily connected with each other; the miniſterial commiſſion, and the temporalities annexed to the diſcharge of it in this country. The circumſtances of Mr. LAW being a nonjuror, and ordained by a nonjuring biſhop, which it is incumbent upon you to prove; together with that of Mr. LESLEY being a nonjuror, who certainly was not ordained by a nonjuring biſhop; tend in no degree to the eſtabliſhment of the point you attempt to maintain. But let them ſtand in the ſame predicament, if you pleaſe; all that I am concerned about is, their *miniſterial commiſſion;* which was equally valid, if received from a nonjuring biſhop, as from any other. To prove this, I need only obſerve to you, that had theſe Divines lived in the preſent day, and repaired to America for the ſake of enjoying the public exerciſe of their function, their letters of orders would have admitted them into the miniſtry

of the American church; becauſe they would have found no political impediment to the regular diſcharge of it. Dr. SEABURY, the late eminently learned and pious biſhop of Connecticut, who was conſecrated by ſome biſhops, who alſo *then* were nonjurors; and who even now, though *no longer nonjurors*, receive from the ſtate nothing but protection—for which alone, there is reaſon to believe, they are truly grateful; is an inſtance in point.* The concluſion, then, which has been drawn from the circumſtance of Mr. LAW being a nonjuror, falls to the ground: in fact,

* It is with infinite concern I here notice a ſarcaſm in a note, annexed to a new edition, not publiſhed, but printed and diſperſed with much induſtry, of Poems by *Michael Woodhull, eſq.*—He calls the conſecration of Dr. SEABURY, "a pretended conſecration, by a junto of non-juring Scotch eccleſiaſtics, aſſuming to themſelves the epiſcopal office." See page 28. To reſtrain poets from fiction, would be to deſtroy their occupation. But when poets accompany their imaginary effuſions with matters of fact and real life, that degree of information neceſſary to juſtify the publication of what reflects upon the characters of others, ought to be poſſeſſed by them; becauſe it is preſumed, that in becoming poets they do not ceaſe to be honeſt men. Had Mr. W. been acquainted with the hiſtory of the Scotch epiſcopal church, he certainly would not have written the note in queſtion; for he would have known the ſubſtance of it to be not more inconſiſtent with truth than with charity. He however ſtands excuſed on the ſame ground on which ST. PAUL placed himſelf, when he ſaid, that "he obtained mercy, becauſe he did it *ignorantly*." 1 Tim. i. 13. Mr. W., in his private character, is both reſpected and beloved; as a man who does honour to the fortune he poſſeſſes: it is to be lamented only,

ſee him in what light you pleaſe, as ordained by a nonjuring biſhop, or not, his caſe proves juſt nothing to the preſent purpoſe.

The hypotheſis, therefore, which you are pleaſed to call *mine*, according to which you attempt to prove that I am living in a ſtate of ſchiſm with the church of England, *becauſe Mr. Law was a nonjuror*; I beg leave to reſign to its author, not having penetration enough to ſee the conſequence drawn from it. Nor do I ſee more clearly, how the teſtimony of nonjuring divines, upon the ſubject of church government, can be affected by an offence committed againſt the civil power; on the contrary, I ſhould think ſuch teſtimony ought to weigh heavy in the ſcale, from the conſideration that the parties who furniſhed it, (whatever judgment may be formed of their *political* opinions) had given the moſt unequivocal proof of their being honeſt men, by ſacrificing every temporal advantage to the preſervation of their conſciences.

that *he writes* as he does. Whatever Mr. WOODHULL's private opinion on the ſubject of kings, prieſts, and republican governments, may be, that delicacy of feeling, poſſeſſed by every liberal mind, ought to reſtrain him from giving unneceſſary offence to the opinions of other people. It is more to be wondered at that Mr. W. ſhould do ſo, when it is conſidered that among his firſt friends he has to reckon ſome of the moſt reſpectable and diſtinguiſhed characters in the clerical profeſſion.

What you proceed to obſerve on the ſubject of the venerable Archbiſhop SECKER, ſtrikes me to be as little to the purpoſe, as your remark on the nonjuring clergy. Nothing is more eaſy than to put hard caſes. But if particular hard caſes, which either may happen, or have ſometimes happened, be deemed of ſufficient force to overthrow a general rule, it will be difficult to find out any ſuch thing as firmneſs or ſtability either in church or ſtate. "*Exceptio non facit regulam,*" is a known and acknowledged axiom. Admitting, therefore, Sir, what you are pleaſed to ſay upon the Archbiſhop's caſe, it does not in the leaſt tend to invalidate the general poſition laid down in the words of ST. IGNATIUS, and other primitive writers, reſpecting the adminiſtration of the Chriſtian ſacraments. In conformity with which, Biſhop BURNETT, in his comment upon the nineteenth article, ſays, "that none ought to baptize, but men dedicated to the ſervice of GOD, and ordained, according to that conſtitution that was ſettled in the church by the Apoſtles." Article nineteenth. Such is the language of our church in her twenty-third article, and in her ſervice for private baptiſm.

In treating of the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, the regular plan upon which it is formed

muſt be laid down: the exceptions, which from particular circumſtances have taken place againſt it, muſt be left to ſpeak for themſelves, but not to militate againſt the general rule. Diſſenters, for inſtance, have been commonly admitted to communion in the church, without having been *re-baptized*. The concluſion to be drawn from this circumſtance is, not that the church conſiders the baptiſm of Diſſenters to be *regular*, but that ſhe thinks the irregularity of it may not deprive the parties of the other benefits of church communion. Admitting, therefore, that the baptiſm of Archbiſhop SECKER was an irregular one, according to the doctrine of the church of England, it does not follow from thence that his miniſterial function was invalid; becauſe the circumſtance of his having been irregularly baptized could not make him a ſchiſmatic, whilſt he lived in communion with the epiſcopal church: at the ſame time that the circumſtance of his having been *regularly ordained* eſtabliſhed the validity of his miniſterial office. With reſpect to the character of the Archbiſhop, both as a divine and a man, the public, I believe, entertain but one opinion on that head; conſequently the pages dedicated to his ſubject might have been omitted.

The object of my Second Diſcourſe was to point out to the reader the nature, deſign, and conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, conſidered as a *viſible ſociety*. As ſuch, it was obſerved that the church muſt have her rules and orders; and, conſequently governors, to carry thoſe rules and orders into effect; becauſe, without ſuch a proviſion for order and government no ſociety can ſubſiſt. Thus far, Sir, it is preſumed, we muſt agree. That ſuch a proviſion has been made, was proved from the commiſſion delivered to the Apoſtles, by virtue of which, a power, originally derived from GOD the Father to CHRIST, was by him communicated to the firſt planters and governors of his church; and, through them, to all his ſucceſſors in the ſame high office, for the purpoſe of directing the affairs of his ſpiritual kingdom on earth, to the end of time.

To aſcertain what particular form of government was eſtabliſhed on this occaſion, an argument was drawn from the early practice of the primitive church; which, it was conceived, would furniſh ſuch a comment upon it, as muſt be ſufficient to determine the judgment of every unprejudiced reader. Proofs on this head might have been multiplied; but it being my deſign to draw the ſubject within the ſmalleſt poſ-

ſible compaſs, recourſe was had to ſuch only as might be deemed concluſive. With this view, an appeal was made to the writings of ST. PAUL; where, in his directions to TIMOTHY, the firſt biſhop of Epheſus, mention is expreſsly made of the ſeveral miniſters of the church, diſtinguiſhed by their ſeveral ſtations and offices.

To remove every doubt with reſpect to the interpretation of ſome particular paſſages in ST. PAUL's writings, the teſtimony of two primitive writers brought forward muſt, it was preſumed, be deemed competent to furniſh decided evidence. ST. IGNATIUS and CLEMENT were contemporaries with the Apoſtles; the latter is ſpoken of as a *fellow labourer* with ST. PAUL. Phil. iv. 3. His epiſtle to the Corinthians, from which I made my extract, is conſidered to be, after the Holy Scriptures, one of the moſt eminent records of antiquity. The authenticity of the epiſtles of ST. IGNATIUS, from whence I have alſo made an extract in proof of the Chriſtian church, has been placed by Biſhop PEARSON* beyond the reach of controverſy. If the abundant teſtimonies which are to be produced from theſe epiſtles in ſupport of the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, as originally

* PEARSON's "Vindiciæ Ignatianæ."

eſtabliſhed under the government of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, be not deemed ſufficient to eſtabliſh the point, I do not ſee how it is poſſible to form any deciſive judgment upon the ſubject.

The deſcription which ST. IGNATIUS, in his epiſtle to the Magneſians, gave of a church, is expreſs and decided. "Your biſhop preſiding in the place of GOD, your preſbyters in the place of the council of the Apoſtles, and your deacons entruſted with the miniſtry of JESUS CHRIST." Such was the idea annexed to the word *church*, as a *viſible ſociety*, in thoſe early days. There is, moreover, ſome reaſon to think, from ST. IGNATIUS's manner of writing, if we give credit to his character, that he was favoured with revelations on this ſubject. In his letter to the Epheſians, he tells them that he had the intention of writing a ſecond letter, for the purpoſe of inſtructing them in certain points, μαλιστα εαν ο Κυριος μοι αποκαλυψη, eſpecially if the LORD ſhould *reveal* any thing to me. In his epiſtles to the Philadelphians he writes thus: "When I exhorted you to adhere to your biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, ſome of you ſuſpected that I had been informed of diſſentions among you; but he is my witneſs, for whom I am now in bonds, that I have known nothing on

this ſubject from *human information;* but the ſpirit has preached to me in the following words, 'Let nothing be done without the biſhop,'—μαρτυς δε μοι εν ω δεδεμαι οτι απο σαρκος ανθρωπινης ουκ εγναν. Το δε πνευμα εκηρυσσεν λεγων ταδε. Χωρις του Επισκοπου μηδεν ποιειτε. In another part of his writings, he calls the appointment of biſhops to be according to the will and direction of JESUS CHRIST, Ιησυ Χριςυ γνωμην ειναι.

IGNATIUS, according to the account given of him by ST. CHRYSOSTOM, was familiarly converſant with the Apoſtles, and drank freely from their ſpiritual fountain; was brought up together with them, and partook with them in all doctrines and myſteries; and was at length thought worthy of ſo great a dignity as that of being a governor of the church; which he obtained in conſequence of the hands of the bleſſed Apoſtles having been laid on his ſacred head.* When IGNATIUS wrote theſe epiſtles, he was in bonds, and on his journey from Antioch to Rome; in expectation of being ſhortly called to ſeal the truth with his blood. The teſtimony of ſuch a man, under ſuch circumſtances, muſt, it ſhould be

* CHRYSOST. Ignat. Encomi.

ſuppoſed, have great weight with every conſiderate, unprejudiced, and impartial perſon.

On ſuch teſtimony, in conjunction with what has been drawn from the writings of ST. PAUL and CLEMENT, have I ventured to ſpeak confidently on the original conſtitution of the Chriſtian church; ſetting it down as a moſt infallible truth, in the words of the celebrated HOOKER, "That the church of CHRIST is at this day lawfully, and ſo hath been from the firſt beginning, governed by biſhops, having permanent ſuperiority and ruling power over other miniſters of the word and ſacraments." Book vii. p. 376.

The authority of the learned Biſhop SANDERSON appearing to have weight with you, will, I truſt, be my apology for troubling you with another quotation, before I cloſe this part of my ſubject. "My opinion (ſays that learned writer) is, that epiſcopal government is not to be derived merely from Apoſtolical practice or inſtitution, but that it is founded in the perſon and office of the MESSIAS, our bleſſed LORD and Maſter JESUS CHRIST, who being ſent by his Father to be the great Apoſtle, (Heb. iii. 1) Biſhop, and Paſtor (1 PETER xi. 25) of his church, and anointed to that office, immediately after his baptiſm by JOHN, which power and the Holy Ghoſt (Acts x. 37, 38)

deſcending then upon him in a bodily ſhape (LUKE iii. 22) did afterwards, before his aſcenſion into heaven, ſend and empower his Apoſtles, (giving them the Holy Ghoſt likewiſe as his Father had given him) in like manner as his Father had before ſent him (JOHN 20, 21) to execute the ſame *apoſtolical, epiſcopal, paſtoral* office; for the ordering and governing of his church, until his coming again; and ſo the ſame office to continue in them, and their ſucceſſors, unto the end of the world." (MATT. xxii. 18, 20.) This I take to be ſo clear from theſe, and other like texts in ſcripture, that if they ſhall be diligently compared together, both between themſelves and the following practice of all the churches of CHRIST, as well in the Apoſtle's time, as in the pureſt and primitive times neareſt thereto, *there will be left little cauſe why any man ſhould doubt thereof.*"

That there long has been a difference of opinion upon this ſubject, is a fact well known; and that this will continue to be the caſe to the end of time, is a circumſtance to be lamented. But, had CALVIN been a biſhop when he ſeparated from the communion of the church of Rome, this difference of opinion, with reſpect to the particular form of church government, would, I am inclined to think, never have

taken place. For that CALVIN's objection was not to epiſcopacy, as the *inſtitution of* CHRIST, but to the *corruption of it* in the perſon of the Pope, we underſtand from the ſentence denounced by him and BEZA upon thoſe who ſeparated from the reformed epiſcopacy in this country; namely, that they were worthy of every anathema, "*Nullo non anathemate dignos.*" Had CALVIN entered into communion with that reformed branch of the church whoſe epiſcopacy he approved, it had been happy for the peace of the church in general, and that of this kingdom in particular. But CALVIN, though a man of diſtinguiſhed and highly reſpectable character, was not without his infirmities. One of them I fear was, the pride of being looked up to as the founder of a new form of church government. To juſtify himſelf in that novel proceeding, authority of ſome kind or other muſt be brought from ſcripture and the primitive writers. But CALVIN (though it rarely happens that a man of information is at a loſs for arguments to ſupport a cauſe which he has warmly eſpouſed) was too well acquainted with ſcripture and church hiſtory, to feel himſelf at all times ſatisfied on this ſubject. His diſciples have been more decided and unequivocal upon it. As the Preſbyterians removed from their

founders, they became more rigid in their principles; at length they loſt ſight of epiſcopacy ſo far, as to commence open war againſt it: and they have now been engaged for theſe two centuries in producing and re-producing all thoſe texts and arguments, which, in their judgment, appear to favour the cauſe they have previouſly adopted; becauſe they would not be thought to have eſpouſed a cauſe, for which nothing was to be ſaid.

Some of theſe texts and arguments you have thought proper to bring forward, by way of counterpoiſe to the purport of my ſecond diſcourſe. Had you done juſtice to that church, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member, by making yourſelf acquainted with thoſe celebrated writers whoſe object it was to maintain the cauſe of epiſcopacy againſt that of Preſbyterian church government; I am perſuaded you would, as a churchman, have felt yourſelf ſtanding upon more firm ground than you do at preſent; and that you would not, by an ambiguous mode of writing, have left your reader in ſome doubt with reſpect to your conviction on the ſubject. It would be foreign to my purpoſe to enter into the whole extent of a ſubject which has been ſo often and ſo fully

handled; my duty will, I truſt, be diſcharged, by returning a brief reply to thoſe particulars which have been brought forward to immediate notice.

Your firſt obſervation reſpecting the promiſcuous application of the word *preſbyter* and *biſhop* appears intended to prove, that the earlieſt biſhops and preſbyters were the ſame. "To argue (ſaid King James, at the Hampton-Court conference) from the practice of a church in its beginning, and before it was perfectly formed, to a church ſettled, and in a flouriſhing condition, is no good reaſoning." COLL. vol. ii. p. 675. Indeed before any advantage can be drawn from it to your preſent ſubject, it muſt be proved, that the words *biſhop* and *preſbyter* conveyed preciſely the ſame meaning in the Apoſtolic age that they do at preſent; if they did not, we ſhall miſinterpret the Apoſtolic writings, by taking words in a ſenſe different from that in which they uſed them.

Επισκοπος, literally tranſlated, is an *overſeer;* a word which is taken in different ſenſes. The Apoſtles are ſtiled *biſhops* in *one* ſenſe, as *overſeers* of the church at large. The preſbyters whom they ordained, might be called biſhops in *another* ſenſe; as overſeers of that particular diſtrict, over which the Apoſtles had placed them. But will it follow from hence, that becauſe

the name of biſhop is applied occaſionally to both, that they therefore acted in the ſame character?

The word Πρεσβυτερος, literally tranſlated, is *elder-man;* a word uſed to expreſs age and authority, and applied to men in different characters and ſtations in life. In ſacred ſcripture it is applied to the Apoſtles; whilſt thoſe who were ordained by the Apoſtles, and over whom they exerciſed authority, are diſtinguiſhed alſo by the ſame title. But does it follow from hence that there was no difference of character between the Apoſtles and the elders they ordained?

The word Διακονος literally ſignifies a *miniſter* or *ſervant.* In the fifteenth chapter of Romans we find JESUS CHRIST called by that name. Are we thence warranted in concluding, that there was no difference between the office of CHRIST and that of *deacons* in the church? Of the ſame kind, in my judgment, are the arguments which, from the etymology of words, are brought to prove, that *biſhops* and *preſbyters* in the early church were the ſame. But, Sir, when it is conſidered, that it was after the Apoſtolic age that theſe two titles of biſhop and preſbyter became diſtinctly appropriated to thoſe officers who now poſſeſs them in the church; our concluſion will be, that we cannot determine in what preciſe ſenſe, according to

the diſtinct language of the preſent age, the words in queſtion are to be taken; unleſs the context, or ſome peculiar circumſtance, be calculated to furniſh an explanation. The difference of opinion that has taken place on this ſubject, appears to have been derived chiefly from a want of attention having been paid to the different circumſtances of the church, at different ſtages of its progreſs in the world. In the Apoſtolic age, the term *biſhop* and *preſbyter* were occaſionally applied indifferently to the ſame perſons: and there was no danger of miſunderſtanding on this ſubject, ſo long as that age continued; becauſe the Apoſtles held the ſupreme goverment of the church in their own hands, and well knew the extent of power delivered by them to others. In the ſucceeding age, from a change of circumſtances, it was judged proper, that a diſcrimination ſhould be made between thoſe titles, which in the day of the Apoſtles had been indifferently uſed; when in conſequence of the title of *Apoſtle* being, by a kind of general conſent, confined to the character of thoſe who had received the original commiſſion from on high, that of *biſhop* was excluſively appropriated to their ſucceſſors in that commiſſion; as that of *preſbyter* and *deacon*, in the ſenſe in which they are now received, was to the

ſecond and inferior miniſters in the church. According to this ſettled order which had at that time taken place, we find the church deſcribed by ST. IGNATIUS in the beginning of the ſecond century. The learned Biſhop ANDREWS on this ſubject writes thus: "In the place of the *twelve* ſucceeded *biſhops*; and in the place of the *ſeventy*, preſbytery, prieſts, or miniſters: and that by the judgment of IRÆNEUS, (lib. iii. c. 3) who lived immediately upon the Apoſtle's age: of TERTULLIAN, (de preſcript:) of ST. AUGUSTINE (in Pſal. xliv.) And this, till of late, was thought the form of that *fellowſhip*, and never otherwiſe imagined." ANDREWS's Sermon on Acts ii. 42.

While we are upon this ſubject, it may not be amiſs to point out the origin of this confuſion of the titles in queſtion, as it has been thus in effect pointed out by EPIPHANIUS. AERIUS and EUSTATHIUS being contemporary ſcholars in Pontus, and equal proficients in learning, at length ſtood againſt each other for a biſhopric. EUSTATHIUS obtained it. AERIUS was greatly offended. The biſhop, with the view of ſatisfying him, made him maſter of an hoſpital. But AERIUS was ſtill diſſatisfied. The repulſe he had received greatly tormenting him, he gave up his hoſpital, and began to ſlander EUSTA-

THIUS; affirming him to be a proud man, and inclined, "ad pecuniarum collectionem," to hoarding of money. On this ground, AERIUS entered into a ſchiſm, by departing from the church; and having allured unto him a multitude of men and women, he fell into many abſurdities. With the view of ſtill more vexing EUSTATHIUS, as alſo for the advancement of his own credit, he affirmed himſelf (being but a prieſt) to be equal in honour and dignity with EUSTATHIUS a biſhop; and that there was no difference by the word of GOD betwixt a prieſt and a biſhop. For proof of theſe aſſertions he uſed the very ſame arguments which now are uſed by thoſe who maintain the ſame opinions. As that the Apoſtles ſometimes writing to prieſts and deacons, and ſometimes to biſhops and deacons, ſhould thereby ſignify that a biſhop and a prieſt is all one. An aſſertion (ſays EPIPHANIUS*) which is "*ſtultitiæ plena*, full of folly."

Thus much, Sir, it may be ſufficient to have ſaid in anſwer to your firſt obſervation; in which you appear to argue, from the indifferent application of the ſame titles to a ſimilarity of office in the parties: a mode of arguing which falls very far ſhort of proof.

* EPIPHANIUS lib. iii. tom. 1. HÆRES. 75.

But it may not, perhaps, be amiſs to beſtow an additional word or two on this ſubject. With this view, I paſs on to your quotation from the lectures of Archbiſhop CRANMER; which I conceive was not deſigned, in the application of it by the Archbiſhop, to convey that ſenſe which, if I underſtand you right, you mean ſhould be drawn from it.

To enable us to form a proper judgment of the teſtimony of ST. JEROM, it ſhould firſt be conſidered who he was; at what time he lived; and what objects he had in view, in thoſe parts of his writings which have been ſuppoſed to favour the Preſbyterian cauſe.

JEROM was a *preſbyter* in the church in the fourth century. In his time, there were ſome deacons in the church of Rome, who, in conſequence of their having grown great through wealth, challenged to themſelves places above *preſbyters*. In his epiſtle to EVAGRIUS, therefore, he argues ſtrongly againſt the folly of ſuch preſumption, "Legimus in ISAIA, 'Fatuus fatua loquitur.' Audio quendam in tantam erupiſſe vecordiam, ut Diaconos nos *preſbyteris*, i. e. *epiſcopis*, anteferret." Feeling for the dignity of the office of *preſbyter*, with which he was inveſted, and conſidering that it was attempted to be encroached on by the *deacon*; his object was, by every poſſible

argument, to magnify the former, with the view of repreſſing the aſpiring pretenſions of the latter. On ſuch a ſubject, it may be expected, (as it too generally happens, when perſons engage warmly in defence of a cauſe, in which they themſelves are intereſted) that ST. JEROM ſhould puſh his argument beyond its proper bearing. This will certainly be found to be the caſe, by all thoſe who read his writings with attention: and I am inclined to think, Sir, you will find more difficulty in reconciling ST. JEROM with himſelf, than you will reap advantage from any teſtimony that is to be derived from him, in favour of the cauſe which he is generally brought forward to ſupport. It appears, indeed, that in ſpite of the apparent contradictions to be found in JEROM's writings, ſome of the ſtrongeſt proofs of the original eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church are to be produced from them. The Archbiſhop's quotation is taken from his commentary upon the Epiſtle to TITUS, publiſhed anno 387, in which he ſays, "that a *prieſt* is the ſame as a *biſhop*." Now the queſtion is, in what ſenſe this *ſameneſs* is to be underſtood. It ſhould appear, from the object you have in view in bringing forward this quotation, that according to the opinion of JEROM, the title *biſhop* and *preſbyter*, as the words

were underſtood in the church in his time, were but two names for the ſame office. But let JEROM ſpeak for himſelf, and it will be found that this was certainly not his meaning. The words immediately preceding the ſhort paſſage above cited reſpect the qualifications required by the Apoſtle for the office of preſbyter and biſhop, where ST. PAUL gives directions to TITUS on that ſubject; c. i. 6, 7. From the circumſtances of the qualifications required being the ſame, JEROM draws his concluſion in favour of the dignity of his particular office. "Idem eſt ergo," &c. Taking the ſubject in this light, the premiſes do not appear to warrant your concluſion. For, though the ſame qualifications were required in a *preſbyter* as in a *biſhop*, it will not follow from thence that there was to be no diſtinction in their office.

But the fact is, JEROM, in order to magnify his office, is ſpeaking of that ſtate of the church, when the titles *biſhop* and *preſbyter* were promiſcuouſly uſed, and before any diſcriminate application of them had taken place; before the contentions which are ſpoken of by ST. PAUL in his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians had rendered it neceſſary, in order to prevent ſchiſm, that one preſbyter ſhould be inveſted with authority over his brother preſbyters. The argu-

ment which he draws from ST. PAUL's addreſs to the biſhops and deacons at Philippi, correſponds preciſely with that drawn by ST. CHRYSOSTOM from the ſame circumſtance, who aſks this queſtion upon it: "What meaneth this? were there many biſhops of one city?" To which he returns the following anſwer: "No, by no means, but by this title he deſigneth the preſbyters, *for then the name was common!*"* JEROM's argument from ST. PAUL's calling the preſbyters of the church of Epheſus *biſhops*, Acts xx. 17, &c. goes to the ſame point.† "This is a certain rule (ſays Biſhop BILSON, in his book on the perpetual government of CHRIST's church, p. 248) to diſtinguiſh biſhops from preſbyters; the preſbyters were *many* in every church of whom the preſbytery conſiſted. Biſhops were always ſingular, that is, *one* in a city, and no more; except another intruded, (which the church of CHRIST counted a ſchiſm, and would never communicate with any ſuch;) or elſe an

* "Philippi una eſt urbs Macedoniæ; et certè in unâ civitate plures (ut nuncupantur) *epiſcopi* eſſe non poterant. Sed quia *eoſdem* epiſcopos illo tempore quos et preſbyteros appellarent, propterea *indifferenter* de epiſcopis quaſi de preſbyteris eſt locutus." Ep. ad TITUM.

† "Et hoc diligentius obſervate, quomodo unius civitatis Epheſi *preſbyteros* vocans, poſtea *eoſdem epiſcopos* dixerit. Ep. ad TITUM.

helper was given in extreme and feeble age, in which caſe the power of the latter ceaſed in the preſence of the former. And this ſingularity of *one* paſtor in each place deſcended from the Apoſtles, and their ſcholars, in all churches of the world, by a perpetual chain of ſucceſſion; and doth to this day continue, excepting where abomination or deſolation, I mean hereſy or violence, interrupt it. Of this there is ſo perfect record in all the hiſtories and fathers of the church, that I much muſe with what face men, who have any taſte of learning, can deny that the vocation of biſhops came from the Apoſtles. For if their ſucceſſion be Apoſtolic, their function cannot chooſe but be likewiſe Apoſtolic; and that they ſucceed the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts in their churches and chairs, may inevitably be proved,* if any Chriſtian perſons, or churches, deſerve to be credited."

But, Sir, although the argument drawn from the occaſionally promiſcuous uſe, in the days of the Apoſtles, of the titles here in queſtion, was pertinent to the purpoſe to which it was applied by JEROM; namely, that of raiſing the dignity of the preſbyter,

* Biſhop BILSON, in his elaborate work, has proved this point to demonſtration: indeed, it may be ſaid, has left nothing neceſſary to be written on the ſubject of church government.

with a view to repreſs the riſing pretenſions of the preſumptuous deacon; nevertheleſs there requires no other authority but that of the ſame JEROM to prove, that it has nothing to do with the cauſe, for the ſupport of which it is generally brought; for, after having puſhed his argument in favour of the preſbyter further than, in the moſt liberal interpretation, it will well bear, by obſerving that ST. JOHN calls himſelf no other than a *preſbyter* in his addreſs to the elect lady, and to his well-beloved GAIUS; (a mode of argument which you have alſo thought applicable to your ſubject, by quoting the caſe of Pope BONIFACE;) he proceeds to inform his reader, that at Alexandria, from MARK the evangeliſt to HERACLAS and DIONYSIUS, who were biſhops of that ſee in his time, *one* elected from the preſbyters was placed in a *higher ſtation*, and called *biſhop*.* He then goes on to ſay, ſtill with an eye to the immediate ſubject before him, "What does a *biſhop*, that a *preſbyter* does not; the office of ordination excepted?"†

* "Quod autem poſtea unus electus eſt, qui cæteris præponeretur, in ſchiſmatis remedium factum eſt, ne unuſquiſque ad ſe trahens CHRISTI Eccleſiam rumperet. Nam et Alexandriæ a MARCO Evangeliſtâ uſque ad HERACLAM et DYONYSIUM epiſcopos, preſbyteri ſemper unum ex ſe electum, in *excelſiori gradu* collocatum *epiſcopum* nominabant," &c. Epiſt. ad EVAGR.

† "Quid enim facit, *excepta ordinatione*, epiſcopus, quod preſbyter non facit?" &c. Ibid

By this very exception, then, the writer who had before pleaded for the ſimilarity of character between the biſhop and preſbyter, from the circumſtance of the ſame title having been, at a certain time given to both, here clearly marks out the diſtinction between their reſpective offices.

Suppoſe, for inſtance, I ſhould ſay, what may be truly ſaid, with reference to the miniſtry of the church of England, that there is no office which a Biſhop can perform, which a preſbyter does not perform in the church; except that of ordination and confirmation. The exception in this caſe would, I preſume, with all reaſonable men, be a ſufficient ſecurity againſt the concluſion that has been drawn from ſome parts of ST. JEROM's writings.

But, Sir, there remains a ſtill more unequivocal and decided paſſage in confirmation of the Apoſtolic eſtabliſhment of church government, to be brought from the writings of the ſame JEROM; which proves to demonſtration, that the argument which he uſed againſt the deacon, was never meant to be uſed, as it has been in theſe latter days, by the preſbyter againſt the biſhop.

In his epiſtle to EVAGRIUS, ST. JEROM ſays thus; "That we may know that the Apoſtolic traditions

and inſtitutions are taken from the Old Teſtament; what AARON, and his Sons, and the Levites were in the Temple, that the Biſhops, the Preſbyters, and the Deacons claim to be in the church."* Now, we all know that AARON was the *one high prieſt* in the temple; his ſons prieſts of a ſecond order; and the Levites inferior miniſters. In the judgment of ST. JEROM, therefore, the Apoſtles had raiſed their plan of church government on the Jewiſh platform; by placing the ſame difference between the *Biſhop*, *Preſbyter*, and *Deacon*, in the Chriſtian church, that there was between the *High Prieſt*, *Prieſt*, and *Levite*, in the Jewiſh Temple; a poſition which ſets aſide every argument, however plauſible, which had been drawn by JEROM, in other parts of his writings, from the indifferent uſe of the titles, biſhop and preſbyter, as applicable to our preſent ſubject.

To detain you no longer, Sir, upon the teſtimony of ST. JEROM, I will conclude with what the learned HAMMOND ſays, upon comparing it with that of IGNATIUS; upon whoſe authority I have alſo ventured

* Et ut ſciamus traditiones Apoſtolicas ſumptas de Veteri Teſtamento; quod AARON et filii ejus atque Levitæ in templo fuerunt, hoc ſibi Epiſcopi et Preſbyteri atque Diaconi vendicent in eccleſia. JEROM Epiſt. ad EVAGR.

to ſpeak ſo decidedly on the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, as eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles: "Nobis certe, qui inter IGNATIUM, Apoſtolorum συγχρονον, et recentiorem tot ſæculis Hieronymum, inter epiſcopum ιερομαρτυρα *de ævo* ſuo teſtantem, et preſbyterum diaconorum faſtum calcantem, et contra eos, quod ad manum fuerat, jaculantem, comparationem inſtituimus, abundè erit; ſi IGNATIUS, ubique ſibi conſtans, cauſæ ubique noſtræ (ακαιρως, ευκαιρως adverſariis ipſis fatentibus) ſuffragatus ſit; HIERONYMUS autem, ſi pugnet nobiſcum quandoque, quandoque etiam ſuffragetur, nec uſpiam a noſtris partibus deſciviſſe putandus ſit, quin pariter et a ſeipſo abiiſſe concludatur; adeoque vel integrum nobis teſtimonium perhibuiſſe, vel inconſtantiâ (quod nolim) ſuâ, quicquid contra nos dixerit, irritum feciſſe." Diſſ. 2d, de IGNATIO, c. 29.

The Scriptures, it is allowed on all hands, teach us, that when the Apoſtles had founded churches, they ordained preſbyters or elders, whoſe office it was to adminiſter the word and ſacraments; or, (to uſe the words of ST. PAUL to the elders of Miletus) to *take heed to themſelves and all the flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt, by the hands of the Apoſtles, had made them overſeers;* or, as the word is now tranſlated, *biſhops.* At the ſame time nothing is more plain from

ſcripture, than that the Apoſtles reſerved to themſelves a ruling power over them; kept a rod of diſcipline in their own hands; cenſured ſome, 1 Cor. iv. 21; excommunicated others, xvi. 3; in ſhort, had the ſovereign care of all the churches in their own hands; 2 Cor. ii. 9. It is, moreover, plain, that all the elders we read of, who were ordained in the church, (before TIMOTHY and TITUS's ſpecial commiſſion took place) had the hands of the Apoſtles laid upon them, 2 Cor. xi. 28; and that there is no mention of confirmation and impoſition of hands but by the Apoſtles alone. This prerogative of ſupreme power and dignity the Apoſtles reſerved to themſelves; and no ſpecious titles of governors, biſhops, paſtors, or the like, attributed to the preſbytery or elders in the New Teſtament, ever brought it into queſtion; ſo that, during the lives and perſonal government of the Apoſtles, thoſe titles might with ſafety be promiſcuouſly uſed, for any of their ſubordinate miniſters. But before the Apoſtles died, or were removed from a *perſonal* viſitation of the ſeveral churches in their different provinces, in conſequence of the great increaſe of Chriſtian converts; we read in the earlieſt records, that they inveſted many ſingle perſons with a governing power over

churches and large cities. SAINT JOHN, for inſtance, placed POLYCARP over the church of Smyrna; and SAINT PETER ordained ST. CLEMENT for the church of Rome. And TERTULLIAN* adds, that the reſt of the churches could prove their biſhops (or ſupreme governors) to be derived from the Apoſtles in the ſame manner; and calls thoſe epiſcopal ſees, the chairs of the Apoſtles. Indeed, it is evident from ſcripture, that both TIMOTHY and TITUS were ordained *ſingular* eccleſiaſtical governors; the one over the church of Epheſus, the other over that of Crete: with a power and ſpecial commiſſion to ordain elders under them; to rebuke and cenſure with all authority; in a word, to ſet in order all things which were wanting. To prove that this charge was of a *perſonal* nature, and did not concern preſbyters at large, ST. PAUL conjures TIMOTHY, in his individual cha-

* Edant ergo origines eccleſiarum ſuarum; evolvant ordinem epiſcoporum ſuorum ita per ſucceſſiones ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille epiſcopus aliquem ex Apoſtolis, vel apoſtolicis viris, qui tamen cum Apoſtolis perſeveraverint, habuerit auctorem et anteceſſorem; hoc enim modo eccleſiæ cenſus ſuos deferunt; ſicut Smyrnæorum eccleſia habens POLYCARPUM ab JOANNE conlocatum refert; ſicut Romanorum CLEMENTEM a PETRO ordinatum edit; proinde utique et ceteræ exhibent, quos ab Apoſtolis in epiſcopatum conſtitutos, Apoſtolici ſeminis traduces habeant. TERTULLIAN, de Preſcript. cap. 32.

racter, before GOD and the LORD JESUS CHRIST and the elect angels, to obſerve thoſe things without partiality. 1 Tim. v. 21. And, as a reaſon for ST. PAUL's inveſting TIMOTHY with this fulneſs of power, he concludes thus, "For I am ready to be offered up," ſays the Apoſtle, "the time of my departure is at hand." 2 Tim. iv. 5. As if he had ſaid, "I am now about to leave this world; the charge which has hitherto been borne by me, I now devolve upon you."

From theſe premiſes, we are juſtified in concluding that all thoſe ſingular eccleſiaſtical governors, who received a commiſſion ſimilar to that received by TIMOTHY and TITUS, had ſundry parts of the apoſtolic ſovereign power conferred upon them, which had never been imparted to preſbyters in common. On taking poſſeſſion of the churches, thus committed to their charge, they muſt find preſbyters miniſtering in that capacity, in which they had been accuſtomed to miniſter under the apoſtolic ſupremacy. On the reception of theſe new commiſſioned governors amongſt them, the preſbyters muſt have been convinced, by thoſe reſerved apoſtolic powers of ruling, ordination, and cenſure, (particularly expreſſed in the commiſſion delivered to TIMOTHY and TITUS) that they were authoriſed to ſucceed in the ordinary juriſdiction and

prerogatives of their departed Apoſtle. On this account it was, that the firſt order of eccleſiaſtics were ſo familiarly called the Apoſtles' ſucceſſors, and the title of Apoſtle given to them by many of the primitive writers. "Ο Αποστολος Κλημης," ſays CLEM. ALEX. ſpeaking of the firſt CLEMENT. Stromat. lib. iv. p. 516. TERTULLIAN calls them the "Apoſtolici ſeminis traduces," "the offspring, or rather the handers down of the apoſtolic ſeed." THEODORET obſerves, they were called Apoſtles, till in proceſs of time, for diſtinction ſake, the name of Apoſtle came only to be given to the Apoſtles eſpecially ſo called.* So Phil. ii. 25; their Biſhop EPAPHRODITUS is called their Apoſtle by ST. PAUL. And ST. CYPRIAN† calls the Apoſtles biſhops; and the biſhops of his time, the ſucceſſors of the Apoſtles.

In fact, there was no other difference between the Apoſtles and biſhops but this: the Apoſtles, being confeſſedly the firſt planters of the Goſpel, were general and ambulatory biſhops, having the care and ſuperintendency of all the churches; 2 Cor. xi. 28;

* In 1 Timothy iii. 1.

† Apoſtolos, id eſt, epiſcopos, diaconos autem Apoſtoli ſibi conſtituerunt epiſcopatûs ſui miniſtros. Apoſtolis data eſt, et epiſcopis, qui eis ordinatione vicaria ſucceſſerunt.

but biſhops were Apoſtles fixed to the juriſdiction of one city or province.

In a word, the eccleſiaſtical writers, who were contemporary* with the Apoſtles, and thoſe who were contemporary† with them, have, as it were, with one voice declared unto us, that the biſhops were the ſucceſſors of the Apoſtles, and the epiſcopal office the *ordinance of* GOD. The reſervation of the Apoſtolic title, by the general conſent of the primitive church, to the bleſſed twelve; the diſtinct appropriation of that of biſhop, a title which had before been common to eccleſiaſtics of different degrees, to thoſe who ſucceeded the Apoſtles as governors of churches; are circumſtances which have been above pointed out, together with the teſtimony of ST. IGNATIUS to the latter point, who declares, that at the very cloſe of the Apoſtolic age, every Chriſtian church, to the very utmoſt bounds, had a ſupreme governor, at that time diſtinguiſhed by the ſingular and peculiar name of biſhop.‡

* IGNATIUS, in his epiſtles, makes mention of many biſhops contemporary with himſelf.

† IRÆNEUS, lib. iii. c. 3. EUSEBIUS iv. 24, and v. 23. POLYCRATES apud EUSEB. v. 24. CLEMENS Alexand. Strom. iii. 6. TERTULL. de Preſcript. xxxii. 36. De BAPTISMO, c. 17. Poſt hos, ORIGEN et CYPRIAN.

‡ "Επισκοποι οι κατα τα περατα ορισθεντες εν Ιησυ Χριστω γνωμη ωσιν." Ep. ad POLYCARP. ſec. 3.

When therefore CLEMENS,† in his epiſtle to the Corinthians, ſays, that the Apoſtles ordained biſhops and deacons, or preſbyters and deacons, to take care of the flocks, which ſhould be provided for them; he well knew that the Apoſtles, who ordained them, belonged to a ſuperior order in the church. The above words of ST. CLEMENT have therefore no reſpect to the number of orders in the church; the caſe to which they were applied, did not require that they ſhould: his object on the occaſion was to reſtrain the mutinous Corinthians from rebelling againſt the preſbyters of the church, becauſe they were of Apoſtolical inſtitution, and as much of GOD's appointment, as the tribe of Levi in the Jewiſh church; which is on that account ſo particularly deſcribed in all the orders and offices of it, and ſo cloſely applied by ST. CLEMENT to the Chriſtian diſpenſation; which is ſo evidently built upon that of the Jewiſh temple, that an impartial reader would conclude that ST. CLEMENT meant to point out to his reader, the exact reſemblance between the Jewiſh and Chriſtian church, by the number and diſtinction of their reſpective miniſters.

† "Κατα χωρας ουν και πολεις κηρυσσοντες καθισανον τας απαρχας αυτων Επισκοπους και Διακονους των μελλοντων πιστευειν." Ep. ad CORINTH. c. 42, p. 54.

It was with this view, Sir, I brought forward that remarkable paſſage of ST. CLEMENT, to which you object; where you ſay, p. 7, "that if in the Jewiſh church there were high-prieſts, as well as prieſts and Levites, this is no good argument why there ſhould be theſe diſtinct orders of clergy in the Chriſtian church." It certainly, would not, ſuppoſing the argument originated with me; but when it is conſidered, that the argument in queſtion has ST. CLEMENT for its author, the concluſion drawn from it will, it is preſumed, be conſidered as ſtanding on too firm a ground to be ſhaken by any modern objection.

You go on to ſay, that the high-prieſt under the law was evidently a type of the great high-prieſt JESUS CHRIST. The concluſion which you mean ſhould be drawn from this circumſtance is evident. But it muſt be obſerved, that what the high-prieſt under the law was, that the high-prieſt under the Goſpel now is. The only difference between them being this: the *former* preſented a bloody ſacrifice, *prefigurative* of that great ſacrifice which was in the fulneſs of time to be offered up on the croſs; the *latter* preſents an unbloody ſacrifice, *commemorative* of the ſame. The high-prieſt under the law looked forward in faith to what was in the fulneſs of time to

take place; the high-prieſt under the Goſpel looks backward, in gratitude to what has been actually accompliſhed.

Again, Sir, the high-prieſt under the law had the ſupreme government of the Jewiſh church committed to him. He was called of GOD to that high office, and publickly inveſted with it by Moſes. The high-prieſt, or biſhop, under the Goſpel, has a ſimilar office to diſcharge in the Chriſtian church: he is CHRIST's vicegerent in his ſpiritual kingdom upon earth; CHRIST having delegated to him that power in his church, which he himſelf received from the Father. For when the man CHRIST JESUS, the Angel of the Covenant, the great High-Prieſt of our profeſſion, having fulfilled his commiſſion upon earth, was about to return to heaven, and appear in his Father's preſence, for the better managing the affairs of his church; he called his Apoſtles unto him, and ſolemnly ſent them, as his Father ſent him: and as he ſent the Apoſtles, with power to govern the church in his abſence, ſo the Apoſtles ſent their ſucceſſors, who by the ſame authority were to ſend others, "*ſucceſſione vicaria*," as ST. CYPRIAN expreſſes it, unto the end of the world.

Such, Sir, being the light in which the biſhops were univerſally ſeen in the primitive church, you will not be ſurpriſed at the ſtrong language of ST. IGNATIUS, when he ſays in his epiſtle to the TRALLESIANS, "what elſe is the biſhop, but one that hath all power and authority above all men, as much as a man can have who repreſents the perſon of JESUS CHRIST:" or at that paſſage from EPIPHANIUS, where, ſpeaking of ST. JAMES, our LORD's brother, the firſt biſhop of Jeruſalem, he ſays, that "he firſt received the epiſcopal chair; being the perſon to whom CHRIST firſt committed his throne upon earth."*

This Catholic doctrine, reſpecting the Divine original of the epiſcopal office, and the ſpiritual government in the kingdom of CHRIST, though liable to abuſe, (and what doctrine is not?) was acknowledged without ſcruple by Chriſtians of all ranks, as well after as before the empire turned Chriſtian; when emperors, not leſs than their ſubjects, ſubmitted themſelves to their biſhops, as to their ſpiritual ſuperiors: emperors who knew well what they did, and who had too much courage to fear any thing but GOD,

* "Και πρωτος ουτος ειληφε την καθεδραν της επισκοπης ω επιτεταται Κυριος του θρονου αυτε επι της γης πρωτω." EPIPHANIUS, Heres. 78. paragr. 7.

and too much wiſdom to be impoſed upon by the craft or policy of prieſts.

Much leſs, indeed, might have been ſaid in anſwer to your objection, had I not concluded, that it muſt have proceeded from a total want of information, with reſpect to the early ſtate of the Chriſtian church.

Now, Sir, though I may not think ſuch knowledge abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation, I muſt ſtill think it eſſential to a perſon who writes on the ſubject on which you have here committed yourſelf. For an acquaintance with ſome of the early writers of the church would have convinced you, that the divinity of the primitive times conſiſted, in a great meaſure, in ſhewing the Jews, with a view of winning them over to the Chriſtian religion, how Chriſtianity was the myſtical Judaiſm, or Judaiſm the myſtical Chriſtianity: in other words, how the temple economy was perfected under the Goſpel, and how the Old Jeruſalem was the type or pattern of the New. To wean them from their attachment to the temple, it was a great object with the firſt preachers to convince them that the Goſpel was no *new* religion, but only the perfection of the *old*; and that the Jewiſh diſpenſation was only preparatory to the Chriſtian. Hence, their uſual way of preaching to the Jews conſiſted in ta-

king away the veil from the face of MOSES, to the end that they might ſee how the platform of the Goſpel was laid in the law. In this ſtyle, and with this view, doubtleſs, did our bleſſed LORD preach after his reſurrection; when, "beginning at MOSES and all the prophets, he expounded to his diſciples in all the ſacred ſcriptures the things concerning himſelf." LUKE xxiv. 27. Thus alſo did the Apoſtles and their ſucceſſors preach after him, opening the typical parts of the Old Teſtament, and ſo applying them to the Chriſtian economy, as to make the knowledge of the law miniſter to the more ready reception of the Goſpel. A ſignal ſpecimen of this mode of preaching we have in the epiſtle to the Hebrews, where the whole ſervice of the temple is conſidered as typical of Chriſtianity, and, as ſuch, accommodated to Chriſtian practice. As the ſervice of the temple then furniſhed a typical repreſentation of the ſpiritual ſervice of the Chriſtian church, ſo it may be expected that its miniſters ſhould alſo furniſh a typical repreſentation of the miniſters of the Chriſtian church; becauſe it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that GOD acts uniformly in his diſpenſations. Now, the analogy betwixt the Jewiſh and the Chriſtian church was ſo exact, even in the chief and moſt eſ-

ſential parts of its conſtitution, that the New Teſtament ſets forth Chriſtianity under the ſymbol of Judaiſm, and myſtically calleth Chriſtians *Jews*.

Thus, Sir, in the 22d of ST. LUKE, the twelve tribes of Iſrael, put for the twelve parts of the Chriſtian church, are committed by our SAVIOUR to the government of the twelve Apoſtles. "I appoint you (ſays CHRIST to his Apoſtles) a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and ſit on twelve thrones, judging the *twelve tribes of Iſrael.*"

Such was the myſtical language, in reference to the connexion between the Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſation, in which our LORD thought proper to commit the government of his church to his twelve Apoſtles, by giving them to underſtand, that they were to be the twelve rulers in his ſpiritual kingdom. In Rev. vii. we ſee the twelve tribes ſymbolically put for the Chriſtian church; and the twelve thouſand that were ſealed, for the true Apoſtolical Chriſtians. Many other inſtances might be produced from the ſacred writings, particularly, from the book of Revelations, (ſee iii. 12, and xxi. 2, and Gal. vi.) where Chriſtianity is ſet forth by Judaiſm, Chriſtians myſtically called *Jews*, and the Chriſtian church the *New Jeru-*

ſalem; from whence the obvious concluſion is, unleſs you will ſuppoſe that the ſacred writers made uſe of language more calculated to impoſe on the underſtandings of their readers than to inform them, that there muſt be a great likeneſs and affinity between the two churches; and that the Jewiſh temple was prefigurative of the Chriſtian church.

So fully convinced, indeed, were the primitive Chriſtian writers on this ſubject, that they analogically uſed the names of *high prieſts*, *prieſts*, and *Levites*, for *biſhops*, *preſbyters*, and *deacons*; and made an indifferent uſe of theſe Jewiſh and Chriſtian titles, conſidering them in a manner as *ſynonimous*. The inſtances above produced were from the writings of ST. CLEMENT and JEROM; and the inference drawn from them appears to me to be perfectly concluſive. Indeed, unleſs the Jewiſh clergy were a pattern, unto which GOD intended that the Chriſtian clergy ſhould be conformed; I do not ſee how the language of the Apoſtle is to be underſtood, where he ſpeaks of perſons periſhing in the gainſaying of Core; for the ſin of Core conſiſted in the rebellion of an inferior miniſter againſt his ſuperior, the high-prieſt; becauſe, as it was pretended on the occaſion, AARON had taken

too much upon him, had aſſumed an authority over the congregation, which did not belong to him.

If, Sir, I have been ſomewhat more particular on this ſubject, than I could have wiſhed; you will, I truſt, attribute it to a deſire of giving you that information which was to be expected from a miniſter of CHRIST's church, who, if rightly inſtructed unto the kingdom of GOD, ought, according to our SAVIOUR's compariſon, to be "like a man that is an houſholder, who bringeth forth out of his treaſure things new and old." MATT. xiii. 52. Should you be tempted, from what has been here ſaid upon this intereſting ſubject, to enter further into it, I flatter myſelf you will feel a portion of that ſatisfaction, which I have experienced, from gaining, by means of this inveſtigation, a clearer inſight into the unity of GOD's plan, in the eſtabliſhment of his church upon earth, than is to be gained in any other way.

The anſwer to your remaining objections may be ſhort.

In page 7 you ſay, that "preſbyters exerciſed the grand epiſcopal right of ordination by the impoſition of hands cannot poſſibly be doubted, otherwiſe" &c. So far, Sir, from entertaining no doubt with you upon this ſubject, I have no heſitation to aſſert,

that no ſuch right was ever exerciſed by preſbyters *alone*, taking that title as it is now appropriated; and that the text you have quoted, whatever it may appear to do in *ſound*, will not in *ſenſe* ſupport the poſition you maintain. This text has commonly been inſiſted upon, as deciſive evidence in favour of *preſbyterian ordination*. But thoſe who bring it forward with this view ſhould recollect, that they build more upon it than even the founder of preſbyterianiſm himſelf ventured to do: for CALVIN expreſsly denies that a college of preſbyters was meant by the preſbytery in this text, and maintains it as his opinion, that ST. PAUL ordained TIMOTHY *alone*, from 2 Tim. i. 6; where ST. PAUL puts TIMOTHY "in remembrance to ſtir up the gift of GOD which was in him, by the putting on of *his* hands."*

That the two apparently different accounts of TIMOTHY's ordination have occaſioned a difference of opinion upon it, I am not to be informed. From the circumſtances of the church, ſince CALVIN's time, it was to be expected, that ſuch ſhould be the caſe.

* "PAULUS ipſe, ſe, non alios complures, TIMOTHEO manus impoſuiſſe commemorat. Quod de impoſitione manuum preſbyterii dicitur, non ita accipio, quaſi PAULUS de ſeniorum collegio loquatur." CALVIN. Inſtit. lib. iv. c. 3. in fine.

But the utmoſt conceſſion that can be made on this point is, that the preſbyters of the church, inferior in order to the Apoſtles, joined with ST. PAUL in the performance of the act in queſtion; a circumſtance, which, if admitted, proves that the grand epiſcopal right of ordination (as you call it) belonged to the ſimple preſbyters of thoſe days, juſt as much as it does to the modern preſbyters or prieſts in our church; in conſequence of their laying their hands, (as it is directed in our ordination ſervice) with the biſhop, upon the head of every one that receiveth the order of prieſthood.

But it appears to me, that the word *preſbytery*, the ſound of which ſeems to have given riſe to the argument that has been drawn from it upon this occaſion, is not to be ſeen in the light in which the advocates for the preſbyterian cauſe have placed it. ST. IGNATIUS calls the Apoſtles alone the *preſbytery* of the church; where, on his way to martyrdom, he tells the Philadelphians, that he betook himſelf to the Apoſtles, as to the *preſbytery* of the church.* By the word preſbytery here uſed, I ſhould underſtand epiſcopacy; in other words, ſome combination of Apoſtles,

* "Προσφυγων τοις Αποστολοις, ως πρεσβυτεριω Εκκλησιας." IGNAT. Ep. ad Philadelph. ſec. 3.

or apoſtolical perſons; ſuch as, in the language of THEODORET, were vouchſafed the apoſtolical grace.* The teſtimony of CHRYSOSTOM is deciſive upon this point; where on this text he ſays, "the Apoſtle ſpeaks not here of preſbyters, (as that title was then underſtood in the church) but biſhops;" adding the reaſon, "becauſe preſbyters did not ordain biſhops."† I know no fairer comment, therefore, upon the apoſtolical account of TIMOTHY's being ordained by the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery, than that he was ordained by a ſpecial member of this apoſtolic preſbytery; by ST. PAUL, for inſtance, accompanied, it is probable, by ſome others of his apoſtolic brethren; in like manner as ST. IGNATIUS was, according to the account given by ST. CHRYSOSTOM, ordained to the biſhopric of Antioch, by having the hands of more than one Apoſtle laid upon his head.‡

I am the more confirmed in this opinion, from the conſideration that TIMOTHY's firſt ordination may be reaſonably dated from the time that ST. PAUL would have him go *forth* with him, Acts xvi. 3; and that, at

* "Των της αποστολικης χαριτος αξιωμενων." THEOD.

† "Ου περι πρεσβυτερων φησι ταυτα, αλλα περι Επισκοπων." CHRYSOSTOM.

‡ "Μακαριων Αποστολων χειρας."

Derbe and Lyſtra, not much above four years after the Goſpel was firſt preached there; where a ſettled conſiſtory of inferior preſbyters, and a form of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline, could ſcarcely be expected to have been as yet regularly eſtabliſhed. See Biſhop PEARSON'S Annal. PAUL. ab A. D. 46, ad A. D. 50, inclusive.

The concluſion meant to be drawn from the objection now under conſideration is ſimilar to that which the preſbyterians are accuſtomed to draw from the other objections to the preſent epiſcopal government, namely, that from the promiſcuous uſe of the terms biſhop and preſbyter in the apoſtolic writings, the ſame office, in the preſent diſcriminating language of the church, is to be underſtood: a concluſion which to me appears to ſtand upon no reaſonable ground whatever. In fact, it is *begging* the queſtion, but not *proving* it.

It may be ſomewhat difficult, perhaps, at this day to aſcertain the preciſe meaning of theſe different titles, in every paſſage in which they occur in the apoſtolic writings; ſince great authorities ſeem not to be perfectly agreed on the ſubject. The argument already addreſſed to your conſideration was grounded upon the opinion of thoſe writers, who conſider that

theſe titles were promiſcuouſly uſed in the early days of the Apoſtles; and that therefore they are not always to be taken in the ſenſe in which they are now underſtood in the church. Such was the opinion of ST. CHRYSOSTOM above produced; where, upon Phil. i. his obſervation is, that by the word *biſhops* is there to be underſtood *preſbyters*, for the name was then *common*. The ſame was alſo the obſervation of THEOPHYLACT on the text, and of THEODORET. The inference from this ſtatement was, that an argument drawn from the indifferent uſe of two titles, at an age when the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church was not perfectly eſtabliſhed, cannot apply to any future age, when in conſequence of the eccleſiaſtical government having acquired a more ſettled form, they had received, from apoſtolic authority, a more preciſe and diſcriminate ſignification. An argument which appears to ſtand on firm ground.

But there is ſtill another opinion upon this matter, which ought to be mentioned, becauſe it is that of the learned HAMMOND, who paid moſt ſcrupulous attention to the inveſtigation of this delicate ſubject. On the authority of EPIPHANIUS he concludes, that by the term Ἐπισκοποι was literally meant biſhops; referring it to all the biſhops of the ſeveral cities be-

longing to that metropolis. For ſuch was PHILIPPI, both as the firſt-fruits of all Macedonia, firſt converted to the faith, Acts xvi. 9, and a prime city of that province of Macedon, πρωτη της μεριδος Μακεδονιας πολις. v. 12—as PHOTIUS expreſsly calls it—Η φιλιππων πολις το Μακεδονων επαρχιας, μετροπολις ουσα." Epiſt. 247. ST. PAUL's Epiſtle was inſcribed to PHILIPPI, as to the metropolis of the province; with the intention that it ſhould be communicated to the biſhops of the different cities contained in it: in like manner, as the Epiſtle of the church at Jeruſalem to the church of Antioch did belong and was communicated to all the churches of Syria and Cilicia; Acts xvi. 4. It is the obſervation of EPIPHANIUS, on the word deacons being immediately ſubjoined to that of biſhops in Phil. i. 1, that, when the churches were *newly* planted, there were not preſbyters as yet conſtituted among them; only a biſhop with one deacon or more in each city; as it was at Jeruſalem, Acts vi.; where, after James's appointment to the biſhoprick, the ſeven deacons are ſoon inſtituted; no preſbyters being created between thoſe two orders, that either ſcripture or any ancient records inform us of. With which original plan of providing for the miniſtry of the infant church, the

teſtimony of CLEMENT above cited, perfectly correſponds; that the Apoſtles, "preaching through regions and cities, conſtituted their firſt-fruits into biſhops and deacons, of thoſe which ſhould come into the faith."

It was from the authority of the moſt ancient records, that EPIPHANIUS ſays his concluſion was drawn, that at the beginning of the church,* before the government was complete in all its offices, the Apoſtles and Apoſtolic perſons placed in the church (ſuch as TIMOTHY and TITUS) created no more than one biſhop, with deacons in each church; the preſent ſtate of things not requiring more, in reſpect of the paucity of the Chriſtians to be governed or inſtructed, but more particularly of thoſe, who in thoſe infant days of the church were fit to be made preſbyters. The biſhops, thus created by the Apoſtles, were biſhops in ſingle cities, or confined diſtricts, over whom the Apoſtles and Apoſtolic men exerciſed a ſupreme and viſitatorial jurisdiction. And ſuch was the character of thoſe appointed by TIMOTHY, as the ſupreme biſhop or metropolitan of Epheſus, conſidered as the capital of the province of Aſia

* "Τα πληρωματα της οικονομιας ουπω λαβουσης."

Minor; and of thoſe alſo appointed by TITUS, as the metropolitan of the iſle of Crete; which contained many cities, EUSEBIUS mentions an hundred, of which, ſaith he, TITUS was made biſhop by ST. PAUL; that under him, ſaith THEODORET, he might ordain biſhops. Such, from this account, appears to have been the primitive conſtitution of the Chriſtian church; agreeably to which, the words *elders* or *biſhops* in the Apoſtolic writings are to be conſidered as words of promiſcuous application, denoting ſometimes the Apoſtles, and ſometimes the ſingular biſhops in each church. In proceſs of time ſome alteration appears to have taken place in the original plan of church œconomy; when in conſequence of the number of believers increaſing, or with the view to remedy ſome inconvenience that might have ariſen from the former practice; preſbyters, in the ſenſe in which that term is *now* underſtood, as a *middle order* between biſhops and deacons, were ordained in the churches.

Now, whatever may have been the concluſion drawn by different readers from the Apoſtolic writings, or however difficult it may be, at this diſtance of time, to aſcertain the preciſe plan of government which the Apoſtles adopted for their infant church,

and at what exact period the alteration in that plan took place; yet certain it is, that, at the close of the Apostolic age, the church had attained that settled form of government which it now possesses. St. Ignatius, in his Epistle to the churches of Asia, having described the presbyters as a *second* order in the church, *inferior* to that of bishops, and consequently not possessed of their peculiar prerogatives; from whence the probable conclusion is, that these presbyters were instituted by St. John in his life-time.

The testimony of St. Jerom, upon which so much has been built in favour of the Presbyterian cause, will doubtless not be rejected, when brought on the opposite side. Speaking of these presbyters, as the *second* order in the church, he says, they were of Apostolic institution. "That we may know (says he) that the Apostles' traditions are taken out of the Old Testament, we have this instance, that what Aaron and his sons, and the Levites, were in the temple; the same the bishops, presbyters, and deacons, challenge to themselves in the church:" the express allusion which had been made use of by St. Clement in the Apostolic age. By the testimony of the same St. Jerom, it has already been proved, that out of this *second* order of presbyters the bishop

was choſen, and thereby advanced to an higher degree above them. To this biſhop, as head, prince, or ruler of the church, as ST. JEROM calls him, obedience was to be paid, for the following reaſon; "The ſafety of the church depends on the dignity of the chief-prieſt, (or biſhop) to whom, if a peculiar power be not given, above all that others have, there will be as many ſchiſms as prieſts in the churches! "Eccleſiæ ſalus in ſummi ſacerdotis dignitate pendet, cui ſi non exors quædam, et *ab omnibus eminens detur poteſtas*, tot in eccleſiis efficientur ſchiſmata quot ſacerdotes." *ST. HIEROM, Dial. adv. Luciferian.*

It was in reference to the obedience neceſſary, according to the Apoſtolic plan of government in the church, to be paid by the inferior orders of miniſters to the biſhop, as ſupreme ruler, that ST. CYPRIAN biſhop of Carthage, in the middle of the third century, makes the rebellion of his preſbyters and others againſt him to be of the ſame kind with that of KORAH, DATHAN, and ABIRAM, againſt AARON; affirming, in an epiſtle to one of the biſhops of his province, that the ſame law which GOD gave for the high-prieſt to judge deciſively in the great council of their ſanhedrim, and to puniſh the

offender, did authoriſe the Chriſtian biſhop to judge and cenſure rebellious ſchiſmatics within his jurisdiction.* In another epiſtle he gives the character of a promoted preſbyter's dignity in the following words: "In conſequence of the preſbyter's advancement to the biſhopric, he was become the one judge, as well as the one high-prieſt, and CHRIST's vicegerent in the church:" "Unus in eccleſiâ ad tempus ſacerdos, ad tempus judex vice CHRISTI." CYPR. Ep. 59. ed. Ox. On another occaſion he reminds CORNELIUS biſhop of Rome to be zealous with him of the unity of the church, becauſe it came from the LORD, and by the Apoſtles to us their ſucceſſors, in the language of the primitive church, by a *vicarious ordination.** To which I only add the teſtimony of one of ST. CYPRIAN's biſhops, in the Carthaginian council; "The ſentence (ſays he) of our Lord

* "Cum pro epiſcopatus vigore et cathedræ authoritate haberes poteſtatem quâ poſſes de illo ſtatim vindicari, habeas circa hujuſmodi homines *præcepta divina*; cum DOMINUS DEUS in Deutronomio dicit; et homo quicunque fuerit in ſuperbiâ ut non exaudiat ſacerdotem," &c. CYPR. Epiſt. iii. §. 1.

* "Ut *unitatem a DOMINO* per Apoſtolos nobis ſucceſſoribus traditam, quantum poſſumus, obtinere curemus." CYPR. Ep. 45, ad. CORNEL. "Et epiſcopis, qui eis (ſcilicet Apoſtolis) *ordinatione vicariâ* ſucceſſerunt." Ep. Firmil. inter. CYPR. Ep. 75.

JESUS CHRIST is manifeſt, who ſent his Apoſtles, and granted to them alone the power which was given to him of the Father, whom we ſucceed, governing the church of the LORD with the ſame power."*

From theſe premiſes taken together, (and more might be brought to confirm them) I feel myſelf juſtified in the aſſertion, that the poſition which you have advanced, reſpecting the right of preſbyters to exerciſe the epiſcopal office of ordination, &c. as applicable to the modern preſbyterian cauſe, in the ſupport of which it is commonly brought, cannot be conſidered as ſtanding upon firm ground.

To your laſt objection, though I cannot ſee what advantage can be drawn from it to the cauſe in hand, where you ſay that it ought to be particularly noted that the Apoſtles were never called biſhops, either by JESUS CHRIST or themſelves, the reply may be very ſhort.

Allowing this to be the caſe, you will recollect, Sir, in the firſt of Acts, where the election of ST. MATTHIAS is recorded; we are informed, upon the authority of PETER, that the ſcripture to be fulfilled

* "Manifeſta eſt ſententia DOMINI noſtri JESU CHRISTI Apoſtolos ſuos mittentis, et *ipſis ſolis* poteſtatem a Patre ſibi datem permittentis, quibus nos ſucceſſimus eâdem poteſtate eccleſiam DOMINI gubernantes." Concil. Carthag. apud CYPR. Suffrag. 79.

upon the occaſion was, what the Holy Ghoſt, by the mouth of DAVID, ſpake before, concerning JUDAS, in the following words; "Let his habitation be deſolate, and let no man dwell therein; and his *biſhopric* let another take." Acts i. 20. The concluſion may ſpeak for itſelf. See HOOKER, p. 376.

Thus, Sir, has an anſwer been given to your ſeveral objections againſt the epiſcopal form of church government; not from the conſideration that the objections were, in themſelves, entitled to ſuch particular attention, as from the reſpect due to the party who brought them. Should I not have been ſo ſucceſsful in my attempt to eſtabliſh the poſition, reſpecting the original conſtitution of the church under the government of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, as to give you perfect ſatisfaction; I have only to hope, that you may be tempted to ſeek further information on the ſubject from thoſe ſources which have been here pointed out. At the ſame time I conſider myſelf indebted for the opportunity afforded me, to review the foundation on which that poſition was built; becauſe from thence I have derived the ſatisfaction of being more fully convinced (if that can be) than I was before, with reſpect to the firmneſs of the ground upon which it ſtands. And what has contributed, in

no ſmall degree, to my conviction on this occaſion, has been the conſideration, that the arguments employed in ſupport of the preſbyterian plan had no exiſtence previous to the eſtabliſhment of the cauſe they have been brought to maintain; not being derived from any interpretation of the ſcripture, that had been received in the church for the firſt fifteen hundred years of the Chriſtian æra; a circumſtance which appears to juſtify the following concluſion, that the texts referred to on this occaſion have been accommodated to a cauſe, to which they did not *originally* belong.

The ſecond poſition which you have drawn from my book is, "that in no caſe whatever the external polity of the church may be altered." This, I beg leave to ſay, is a poſition not to be found in my book; for no where is ſuch *unqualified* language on this ſubject to be found. It is an inference drawn by yourſelf from what was judged proper to be ſaid, to what appeared to be a very objectionable poſition of Archdeacon PALEY, reſpecting the form of church government, eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles, being conſidered only as adapted to preſent circumſtances, but not with a view to its being a permanent eſtabliſhment. A paſſage from Mr. GISBORNE, ſpeaking a ſimilar language, has been brought forward on this

occaſion. A paſſage from MOSHEIM, (who is deemed high authority with ſome people) coupled with another from his tranſlator, ſpeaking the ſame language, might alſo be brought forward. And I have not the leaſt doubt, were the ſubject worth inveſtigation, that I could fill pages with ſimilar paſſages. But, whatever deference may be due to the authority of reſpectable men, there is at the ſame time ſome juſtice due to ourſelves. After having, therefore, well examined the ground upon which I have preſumed to differ from Dr. PALEY on this head, I ſee no reaſon to change it, whatever inference ſome may thing proper to draw from it. My idea of the church muſt, in this reſpect at leaſt, be a *true* one, becauſe it is grounded upon the words of the Head and Founder of it, where he ſays, "My kingdom is not of this world."

By which is to be underſtood, that the kingdom or church of CHRIST has an exiſtence independent of the kingdoms of this world; and that its conſtitution was ſuited to that independent ſtate. No idea of accommodation to the powers of this world, entered into the original plan on which the church, as a ſociety, was founded; and on which we are told, it is to continue to the end. It is not to be ſuppoſed,

therefore, that attention to a circumſtance of this nature was neceſſary to be paid in any future age of the church, which was not paid at its original eſtabliſhment.

The concluſion to be drawn, therefore, from the ſilence of ſacred ſcripture on this ſubject, is the very oppoſite to that which you have drawn from the ſame circumſtance. So far from thinking that the reaſon why the ſacred ſcriptures ſpeak ſo ſparingly on this ſubject is, that in every Chriſtian country ſuch an eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction might be ſet up, as was beſt calculated to ſuit the genius and welfare of that particular nation; my opinion is, that nothing is ſaid on this ſubject, becauſe no ſuch idea ever exiſted in the heads of the Apoſtles; and that their ſilence upon this ſubject does not warrant your concluſion upon it; becauſe the tenour of the Apoſtolic commiſſion, and the manner in which it was diſcharged, leaves no reaſonable ground for ſuppoſing that the eccleſiaſtical and political juriſdiction were, in their judgment, deſigned to have any neceſſary connexion with each other. On this idea, Sir, I do not venture to make uſe of language, which may eaſily be perverted to meanings foreign to my purpoſe And before I commit myſelf on ſuch a ſubject, I ſhould be glad to

know, on the ground that the external formation of the church may be accommodated to the ſtate, where the exact line is to be drawn between the reſpect due to a Divine inſtitution on one hand, and what appears to you on the other to be the neceſſary accommodation to civil policy, or the cuſtom of the world.

What was ſaid, in objection to Dr. PALEY's poſition, was the leaſt that ought to have been ſaid on the ſubject. His poſition, that the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church is to be accommodated to the different arrangements of civil policy, appears to be as irreconcilable with the independence of the Chriſtian church, as it is unſupported by Holy Writ. It may be political language, but it certainly is not the language of the Bible. It is not ſaid, that in no caſe whatever the external polity of the church may be altered. GOD, who was the inſtitutor of the eccleſiaſtical polity, may certainly alter it when He pleaſes. And ſhould He think proper to interfere, by vouchſafing a freſh revelation for that purpoſe, it will be our duty to conform to the new plan, whatever it may be, as an improvement upon the old one. But till ſuch an event take place, it is a poſition, which, it is preſumed, no Chriſtian will controvert, that *that* form of church government, which has

received the ſanction of Divine inſtitution, ought not to be altered by leſs authority than *Divine*. For, in this caſe, we muſt not judge from what has been, or what may be done in the world; but what ought to be done, in conformity to the revealed will.

Well aware, Sir, that in theſe times of looſe writing and looſe thinking, it may be neceſſary, by way of preventing unmeaning outcry, to ſhelter myſelf under authority; I bring forward that of the learned and pious Dean STANHOPE. In his comment on the Epiſtle for ST. MARK's day, ſpeaking of church government, he ſays, "This ſpiritual government, being inſtituted by CHRIST himſelf, cannot be abrogated, ought not to be changed by any authority leſs ſacred, any declaration leſs poſitive and expreſs, than that by which it was firſt inſtituted and eſtabliſhed. This, we have reaſon to believe, would not be wanting, were ſuch authority, in his judgment, miſchievous or unneceſſary. But, for any man to pronounce it ſo, without any ſuch ſignification from its author, is certainly moſt impudent ſacrilege, and raging impiety."*

The judgment which you appear to have formed reſpecting the changeable nature of the eccleſiaſtical polity muſt, I ſhould preſume, have ariſen from want

* STANHOPE on the Epiſtles and Goſpels, v. iv. p. 218.

of due attention having been paid to the church, conſidered in itſelf as an *independent* ſociety.

The kingdoms of this world GOD has committed to the wiſdom of men. Human government, therefore, as the reſult of human contrivance, ſhould be accommodated to the genius and welfare of the particular nation over which it is exerciſed; and conſequently muſt be expected to alter with times and circumſtances. The ſpiritual kingdom of the church GOD committed to CHRIST in his mediatorial character; who, as king, ſettled the government of it, for the general uſe of his ſubjects in all the world. To this government, conſidered as divine and univerſal in its deſign, the genius of every nation, diſpoſed to receive the Goſpel, muſt be accommodated. From whence it follows, that each government has its ſeparate juriſdiction, at the ſame time that both are derived from the ſame Divine authority. The diſtinction between theſe two governing powers is clearly marked, by the difference between the *ſpiritual* and *temporal* intereſts of mankind. A diſtinction, not invented by prieſts, but ordained by JESUS CHRIST, for the wiſeſt purpoſes; that his kingdom being diſtinguiſhed from the kingdoms of the world, the extent of obedience due to each might be clearly aſcertained. A *real*

diſtinction, by all the rules of logick, which teacheth that different ſubjects are really different from one another; and that thoſe things are really diſtinct, of which one can exiſt without the other. In a word, Sir, the juriſdictions of church and ſtate are like two parallel lines, which, ſo long as they are continued in their appointed direction, may be extended *in infinitum*, without the poſſibility of interfering with each other.

In this ſtate of independence upon the civil power, ſo far as *ſpirituals* were concerned, did the church ſubſiſt for three hundred years together. During the time that the Apoſtles and their ſucceſſors preached againſt the Jewiſh and Gentile religions; planned and formed churches in the greateſt cities in the world, thereby turning it in a manner upſide-down; "doing all things contrary to the decrees of CÆSAR and the laws of the empire, and ſupporting all they did by the authority of another king, one JESUS;" nothing could be more viſible than was the diſtinction between the kingdom of CHRIST and that of CÆSAR. When the ſtate came into the church, theſe two ſeparate kingdoms became united in the ſame civil ſociety. But in this caſe the union, being an accidental circumſtance, did not affect the original independent rights of either party. It was rather a

fœderal than an *incorporating* union; an union of agreement between two parties; by which, powers having a juriſdiction independent of each other were brought to act together for the general advantage of ſociety. Should it be the will of Providence, that a ſeparation ſhould again take place between theſe two kingdoms, the ſtate will leave the church, ſo far as reſpects its government, juſt in the ſame condition in which it was, previous to their original connexion. Expreſsly in this condition is the epiſcopal church in Scotland, and in the United States of America, at this moment, where its members receive not the leaſt aid or power from the ſtate: of which, therefore, excepting in their *civil* capacity, they are completely independent.

Seeing the ſubject in this light, "the inſtitutions of CHRIST, without making compariſon between them, are dear and ſacred to me, as well as his revelations: and I have no more power to do any thing againſt the doctrines, which I think relate to the being and government or diſcipline of the church, as a ſociety, than againſt thoſe which relate unto it as a ſect."*

The note in page 200 of your book, which is deſigned to be ſubjoined to the quotation from Mr.

* HICKES on the dignity of the Epiſcopal Order, page 259.

GISBORNE, appears to be quite foreign to the purpoſe, to which it is applied. The poſition which the paſſage from Mr. G. is brought to controvert, is, that the external *polity* or *form of church government* is not to be altered by human authority. Mr. GISBORNE affirms it to be the opinion of the generality of proteſtants, that it is. To add to his authority, you bring a quotation from the thirty-fourth article, which treats of the right which each particular national church has to ordain, change, and aboliſh *ceremonies* and *rites* of the church, advanced only by human authority; a poſition which is univerſally admitted.

Might I be allowed, Sir, without offence, to put the foregoing reaſoning into the form of a ſyllogiſm, it will run thus: "What is eſtabliſhed by Divine authority cannot be altered by mere human authority. The government of the church was eſtabliſhed by Divine authority, *ergo &c.*" "*Negatur minor.*" "Every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change, and aboliſh ceremonies and rites of the church, *ordained only by man's authority*; *ergo*, the government of the church, eſtabliſhed by *Divine* authority, may be altered." "Probatur minor."

The reader, it is preſumed, will readily perceive that the government of the church is one thing, the appointment of the rites and ceremonies of it another; and that a ſtrange jumble is here made between two things totally diſtinct from each other; between a Divinely-inſtituted government, and thoſe indifferent things which have been left to the management and diſcretion of governors.

The third objectionable poſition drawn from my book is, "that all who are out of the pale of the church, thus eſtabliſhed, have no promiſe of ſalvation, but muſt be left to the *uncovenanted mercies* of GOD.

Upon this ſubject a very decided opinion has been given. "By expreſſing myſelf in ſuch lofty terms againſt the whole body of diſſenters, it is ſaid, that I have done a moſt eſſential injury to the church of England, by holding her up to view as being of an *intolerant ſpirit*; and that no pope or cardinal ever extolled the power of the church more highly, or ſhewed themſelves more void of charity; and this in a period when candour and moderation are happily known and practiſed (it ſhould ſeem, to my great regret and concern) among ſerious Chriſtians of different denominations; and that I am remanding to the ſhades the benign and amiable ſpirit of peace,

love, and univerſal good-will, and calling up in its ſtead that meagre, narrow-minded ſpectre of bigotry and intolerance, whoſe object it is to affright the timid and the ignorant, to ſet the whole houſhold of faith together by the ears."

And in the note, page 200, intended to be ſubjoined to the foregoing deſcription of my demerits, I am charged with "dealing out damnation by wholeſale:" in other words, withholding ſalvation from the whole body of diſſenters, merely becauſe they are diſſenters.

"A ſoft anſwer," the wiſe man ſays, "*turneth away wrath.*" Permit me therefore to hope, unconſcious as I am of ſtanding in the predicament in which you have placed me, that cool reflection will diſpoſe you to think that the foregoing harſh ſentence ſavours more of haſte than judgment. But as the true merits of the cauſe in which I am engaged, do not depend upon the manner in which I have handled it; and as the heavy charge here brought may affect me *perſonally*, in conſequence of my having committed myſelf without ſufficient judgment; but does not in the leaſt weaken the foundation on which the eſtabliſhment of the church is placed in my book; I ſhall defer the conſideration of it to a future letter.

The object immediately before me at preſent is to ſtrengthen and ſecure that ground, which your firſt letter ſeems deſigned to ſhake, by bringing forward to the reader many of thoſe plauſible objections to our church eſtabliſhment, which have long ſince received repeated and ſufficient anſwers. That the difference of opinion upon this controverted ſubject ſhould now be revived among us, is not much to be wondered at, when we conſider the temper of the times in which we live; a temper which (I am ſorry to ſay) diſpoſes man for nothing ſo much as for the overthrow of all eſtabliſhed opinions.

It ſhall only for the preſent be obſerved, that toleration is the act of the ſtate, not of the church. When, therefore, every diſſenter from our eſtabliſhment lives in actual poſſeſſion of that rational offspring of the enlightened policy of this country, to repreſent the church of England as being "of an *intolerant ſpirit*," becauſe ſuch of her clergy who know any thing of the nature of the Chriſtian church, as a Divinely-inſtituted ſociety, are obliged to conſider thoſe who are not regularly connected with it by covenant to be unpoſſeſſed of any *covenanted title* to the promiſes made to it; is to make uſe of language, if not perfectly unintelligible, at leaſt in a

ſtriking degree *incorrect*; as calculated to confound two ſubjects, in themſelves perfectly diſtinct.

The idea now induſtriouſly propagated, which tends to the annihilation of all order and government in the church; that, provided the doctrines of Chriſtianity be taught, it matters not to what ſociety of Chriſtian profeſſors we are attached; is an idea that never received countenance from any ſober-thinking Chriſtian for the firſt fifteen hundred years of the Chriſtian æra. Had it been broached in the primitive days, it would have been conſidered as a viſionary and wild notion, incompatible with the exiſtence of any regular eſtabliſhment on earth. As ſuch it would have been univerſally reprobated, and the maintainers of it condemned by the ſevereſt eccleſiaſtical cenſure. Yet, in the comprehenſive and adventurous wiſdom of modern times, this is conſidered as a kind of neceſſary article of faith; and thoſe are branded with the name of bigots who do not hold it. Profeſſing myſelf to be one of thoſe bigots, and being perfectly ſatisfied with the company in which I am placed, my only hope is, that I may be thought worthy to continue in it. You ſeem to me, Sir, to be fond of putting caſes, which, however ſuitable you may ſuppoſe them to be to ſome particular views

of your own, are not always relevant or applicable to the matters immediately before you. In this ſpirit you aſk, which is of moſt conſequence, "The outward polity of the church, or thoſe ſacred verities, for the ſake of which that outward polity was inſtituted?" This is a queſtion, which, though not proper to be aſked, no miniſter can for a moment be at a loſs to anſwer.

ST. PAUL directs his diſciples to "obey them that had the rule over them, and ſubmit themſelves," &c.; Heb. xiii. 17. Obedience, therefore, to eccleſiaſtical government is *one doctrine of Chriſtianity*. You will ſay, it is not a doctrine of eſſential conſequence, like a fundamental article of faith: but that is more, perhaps, than any man is authoriſed to ſay. The only difference that I can ſee between a fundamental, and what you conſider in this caſe to be a non-fundamental verity is, that the one is an article of *faith*, the other of *practice;* but both are eſſential to ſalvation, as being grounded upon the ſame Divine authority. Thus much may be ſaid in reference to the parties concerned. With reſpect to the cauſe of Chriſtianity itſelf, there can be no doubt that the articles of faith and the doctrine of ſubmiſſion to eccleſiaſtical authority are both, in their way, eſſential

to its advancement: the one, conſidered as the treaſure to be preſerved; the other, as the guardian appointed to preſerve it. It is not for us, therefore, to weigh, in the imperfect ſcale of human reaſon, articles of faith againſt the doctrine of Divine ordinances, with the view of regulating our obedience by the idea of importance which our judgments may annex to either, ſeparately conſidered; but to place the example of ZACHARIAS and ELIZABETH before our eyes, who are celebrated in the Goſpel ſtory for "walking in all the *commandments* and *ordinances* of the LORD blameleſs."

Without, therefore, attempting to determine, (what, perhaps, at this diſtant day, is not to be determined) upon the preciſe form of government, which the Apoſtles adapted to the circumſtances of the infant church; I heſitate not to affirm, upon the authority of ST. CLEMENT, (authority little inferior to that of ST. PAUL) that epiſcopal government was a characteriſtic mark of the Chriſtian church, as ſoon as it had acquired any regular eſtabliſhment. And, although the language of the Apoſtles has by ſome been conſidered as not ſufficiently decided on this point, yet, according to the tenour of the anſwer given by CHARLES the Firſt to HENDERSON, there does

not appear to be any authority more proper to determine the ſenſe of ſacred ſcripture, than the authority of the primitive church. The paſſage on which this opinion of CLEMENT is grounded, is taken from his Epiſtle to the Corinthians, written, it is ſuppoſed, before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem; conſequently within forty years after our LORD's aſcenſion, and certainly before the death of ST. JOHN; an epiſtle, held in ſuch eſtimation by the early Chriſtians, as to be made a part of the public ſervice of the primitive church: from this paſſage it appears that the church, at the time of writing that epiſtle, had aſſumed the ſame preciſe form of government, under which it has ever ſince continued, and by which it is diſtinguiſhed in this country. To this form of government, in obedience to the Apoſtolic direction, I hold it to be my duty, as a Chriſtian, to ſubmit.

Thoſe who differ from me in opinion, I leave to themſelves; not in the character of a bigot, pronouncing ſentence on thoſe who are without the church, as you have thought fit to repreſent me; but in the character of a miniſter of the church, who, being directed by our liturgy, to pray conſtantly againſt *ſchiſm*, muſt think it his duty to prevent

Chriſtians, as far as may be, from falling into ſo dangerous a ſin.

Human reaſon is always flattering us with the idea that we ſerve GOD beſt in ways of our own chooſing; but revelation informs us that GOD is well ſerved only in thoſe of his own appointment. The words of the Prophet, though perhaps not ſtrictly applicable to our ſubject, may leave no unuſeful impreſſion behind them upon this occaſion. "Behold! to obey is better than ſacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the ſin of witchcraft, and ſtubbornneſs is as iniquity and idolatry." 1 SAMUEL XV. 22, 23.

Before we quit the preſent head, it may be proper, by way of preventing unneceſſary repetition, to make a ſhort reply to two other objectionable poſitions which have been pointed out. In page 192 of your publication I read thus: "You will do me the juſtice to believe, that I have read your Guide with very accurate attention," &c. I will moſt certainly do you the juſtice, Sir, to believe any thing that you may affirm; and though you may miſunderſtand, I will not for a moment ſuffer myſelf to imagine you capable of wilfully miſrepreſenting any man; it muſt therefore be ſuppoſed, that the concluſion drawn,

page 167, relative to my book, does, in your own judgment, ſtand upon a firm foundation. Upon turning to your table of contents, the reader is directed to page 167 for the diſcovery of the fundamental error of my work. In that page he is informed, that the firſt leading error, the πρωτον ψευδος of my whole publication, in other words, the baſis upon which it is built, is the poſition, that "the church of CHRIST and the church of England are *excluſively* one and the ſame." From this poſition being marked with inverted commas, the reader is led to conclude that it is ſomewhere to be found, *totidem verbis*, in the publication here made the ſubject of animadverſion. If ſuch be the caſe, the page in my book where this poſition is to be found, ought to have been pointed out; if not, thoſe paſſages which have led to the above concluſion, ought to have been ſubmitted to the reader's judgment. Admitting that I underſtand the poſition right, it ſpeaks thus; the church of England and church of CHRIST are ſynonimous terms, and the church of England is the only church of CHRIST. Permit me, as the author, to aſk you, Sir, in what page of my book the above poſition is to be found. A poſition incompatible with the one here laid down is to be found in page

148; where, ſpeaking of the ſeparation of the church of England from the church of Rome, it is obſerved, that it was neither the government, nor doctrine of the church of Rome that were proteſted againſt, but the corruptions that had taken place in both. In ſeparating from the church of Rome, we ſeparated from a corrupt church. But this ſeparation did not render that church leſs a church of CHRIST than it was, when we were in communion with it. Poſſeſſing the characteriſtics of a church, namely, the government and doctrine, it ſtill remained a church; though, in conſequence of the additions which had been made to the fundamental articles of Chriſtian faith, it was a church in corruption. The ground upon which the church of England ſeparated from the church of Rome, in this ſtate of corruption, is repreſented by me to have been ſimilar to that upon which the church of Rome, as a ſeparate branch of the church of CHRIST, proteſted againſt the uſurpation of the Biſhop of Conſtantinople, as the head of another branch of the ſame church. In conformity to which idea, I proceed to obſerve, "that the church of England is alſo a ſeparate branch of the church of CHRIST;" and that "the Proteſtantiſm of the church of England conſiſts in

the right which one independent branch of the church of CHRIST claims, of proteſting, in its collective character, againſt the errors of another branch of it, with which it may, or may not, hold communion." Vide Guide, p. 150. In conformity with the ſame idea you read in page 149, that the eſtabliſhed church of this kingdom is a *branch* of the church of CHRIST."

Was it poſſible, Sir, that the author, from whom the foregoing extracts are taken, could entertain the poſition you have drawn from his book, he was certainly moſt unqualified to write upon the ſubject he undertook. But, ſince it appears that I have been ſo unfortunate as to be miſunderſtood on this occaſion, (though it would be an affectation of candour which I do not feel, was I to pretend, that I think all the blame of being ſo miſunderſtood is to be laid at my door) I will endeavour to explain myſelf more fully.

Every Chriſtian ſociety, poſſeſſing the characteriſtic marks of the church of CHRIST, I conſider to be a ſeparate branch of the catholic or univerſal viſible church upon earth. The church of England, the church of Ireland, and the epiſcopal church of Scotland and America, poſſeſs thoſe marks. In the ſame light the churches of Denmark, Sweden, and Rome,

are to be conſidered; not to mention the great remains of the once-famous Greek church, now to be found in the empire of Ruſſia, and in the Eaſt. All theſe churches conſtitute ſo many ſeparate branches of the ſame catholic church of CHRIST; independent of each other, ſo far as relates to the direction and appointment of indifferent things, as rites and ceremonies; but connected together as one body, by the profeſſion of the ſame fundamental articles of faith, and the ſame Divinely-inſtituted form of government.

So much confuſion has been introduced into this ſubject, in conſequence of thoſe lamentable diviſions which have, in theſe latter days, taken place among Chriſtians, that ſome allowance muſt be made for the reader, ſhould his mind be unprepared for the ready reception of the foregoing poſition. According to the received language of the day, the congregations of ſeparatiſts of every denomination are ſtyled *churches;* whilſt the church of Rome, poſſeſſing the eſſential characteriſtics of a church, is not allowed to be one: and many perſons, not deficient in knowledge or information, for want of having paid proper attention to the ſubject, run away with miſtaken notions concerning it. The only idea that can be an-

nexed to the church of Rome in their minds is that of the whore of Babylon, an idolatrous church, and as ſuch, no church of CHRIST.

But it ſhould be remembered, that no being, but that Divine Being who originally made the church, by calling men out of darkneſs into light by his word and ſacraments, can unmake it. Till He ſee fit to remove his candleſtick from any place that has been favoured with it, the church remains in it, be it in ever ſo corrupt a ſtate. An idolatrous church, though not a *pure* church, ſtill continues to be a church. It muſt be recollected, that the whole nation of the Jews, both prieſts, princes, and people, fell often into idolatry; and though they were often puniſhed for it, ſtill their church continued to be the then *only viſible church* upon earth; they were ſtill GOD'S peculiar people. "Yea, when they had made them a molten calf, and ſaid, this is thy GOD that brought thee out of Egypt, and had wrought great provocations; yet thou in thy manifold mercies forſookeſt them not in the wilderneſs; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way, neither the pillar of fire by night, to ſhew them light, and the way wherein they ſhould go. Thou gaveſt alſo thy good ſpirit, to inſtruct them; and

withheldeſt not thy manna from their mouth, and gaveſt them water for their thirſt. Yea, forty years didſt Thou ſuſtain them in the wilderneſs, ſo that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet ſwelled not. Moreover, Thou gaveſt them kingdoms and nations," &c. NEHEMIAH ix. 18.

From whence it follows, that the vineyard of GOD's church may be ſo overrun with weeds, as in a great degree to choak the produce of the ſoil; ſtill it remains a vineyard, till ſuch time as GOD, by taking down its incloſure, ſhall think fit to throw it out to the waſte. A wife, though ſhe prove unfaithful to her huſband, continues to be a wife, till a legal divorce has diſpoſſeſſed her of that title. The church is the ſpouſe of CHRIST—ſhe may prove unfaithful to her lord and huſband; but, till that lord and huſband ſhall make out a bill of divorcement againſt her, and put her away, ſhe retains her character, at the ſame time that ſhe diſgraces it. Should authority be neceſſary to eſtabliſh this point, that of the pious Biſhop HALL will, no doubt, be ſatisfactory; who, after handling this ſubject in his *Reconciler*, has ſupported his own opinion upon it by the judgment of ſome of the moſt celebrated divines of his time.

A very few obſervations will, perhaps, be ſufficient, in reply to what has been met with in pages 198 and 199 of your book, where you ſay, "you muſt neceſſarily diſtinguiſh between a *national church*, or eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, and the church of CHRIST, ſcripturally ſo called: and that, whilſt I am pleading with ſo much warmth and ability for the *former*, you have been contending as earneſtly for the *latter*."

Had I not learnt to be ſurpriſed at no miſinterpretation of my meaning, I ſhould certainly be ſtruck with the foregoing obſervation. In reply to it, I would beg leave to aſk, upon what part of my book the obſervation has been founded. In the chapter which treats of the nature, deſign, and conſtitution of the church, where, if any where, we might expect to meet with ſomething to this purpoſe, the church is deſcribed as "a ſociety not of man's, but of CHRIST's forming; a ſociety or ſpiritual incorporation of which *He* is the head; and all individual Chriſtians, who have been regularly admitted into it, the members: a ſettled permanent eſtabliſhment, the work of Divine wiſdom." P. 35.

The concluſion drawn from my book reſpecting the church conſidered as a *national eſtabliſhment*, is not, it is preſumed, neceſſarily connected with the

foregoing deſcription of it. But to prove to demonſtration, that the author poſſeſſed very diſtinct ideas upon this ſubject, I need refer the reader only to p. 387, where it is thus written; " the connexion of the church with the ſtate appears to be an *accidental* circumſtance, which may or may not exiſt, and which, conſequently, did not conſtitute a part of the plan upon which it was originally eſtabliſhed. The ſtate may come into the church, as in the days of CONSTANTINE; but the church is not to accommodate itſelf to the ſtate, to produce this effect: or the ſtate may be in oppoſition to the church, as in the days of the Apoſtles. Its eſtabliſhment, therefore, as a *ſpiritual ſociety*, muſt reſpect its permanent condition, as it exiſts in itſelf upon the authority of its Divine Founder; not its *accidental* one, as it is occaſionally connected with civil policy." *Vide Guide*, page 387.

After reading the above paſſage, no doubt can be entertained with reſpect to my decided opinion upon this ſubject; and I ſhould hope that it muſt appear to every conſiderate reader, that in my mind a national eſtabliſhment is one thing, and a Chriſtian church another; and that they are by no means neceſſarily connected.

Now, ſhould it be poſſible, that there may be any reader to whom the concluſion from the foregoing premiſes, is not ſufficiently obvious; for his ſake, the following ſhort ſtatement is ſubjoined. A national eſtabliſhment *protects* and *ſupports*, but does not *make* a church of CHRIST. It was a church of CHRIST previous to its eſtabliſhment by the ſtate; and it will continue to be the ſame church, ſhould the ſtate think fit to deſert it. The church of CHRIST in this country is eſtabliſhed, becauſe it is the church of CHRIST; but it is not the church of CHRIST, becauſe it is eſtabliſhed. To multiply words on this ſubject, would be an unwarrantable treſpaſs on the patience of the reader.

After what has been ſaid reſpecting the church of CHRIST in the foregoing paſſages, and more particularly in page 15, where the object GOD had in view, in its eſtabliſhment upon earth, is briefly deſcribed; I own I can hardly think you ſerious, when you ſay, "that you are really at a loſs to know what I mean by the church;" and conſequently, that to your ludicrous obſervation, in which you affect to delineate my ideas of a church, namely, "that four walls, a ſteeple, a ring of bells, ſome pews, a chancel, a communion-table, a biſhop, a prieſt, and a deacon,

conſtitute the principal materials of which it is compoſed," no ſerious reply is expected.

The ſeveral definitions of the church of CHRIST, that contained in the 19th article excepted, which you have inſerted in the concluſion of your firſt letter, in oppoſition to the idea ſuppoſed to be contained in my book on that ſubject, appear to me to be foreign to the purpoſe. The profeſſed object of my book is to treat of the church of CHRIST as a *viſible* ſociety, The definitions you have brought, relate to it as an *inviſible* ſociety. Allowing them to be true, in the ſenſe in which they were originally applied by their reſpective authors, it will not follow from that conceſſion, that any argument can be drawn from them in contradiction to a poſition, which they were not deſigned to oppoſe. The inviſible and the viſible church of CHRIST, convey two very diſtinct ideas to the intelligent mind. The *inviſibility* of the church reſpects the internal relation, which the ſpiritual members of it bear to CHRIST. This, as an object of faith, is not a proper ſubject for the exerciſe of reaſon. The *viſibility* of it reſpects that external polity, by which the church is diſtinguiſhed in the world as a *viſible* ſociety. On this, as an object of notoriety, human judgment may be exerciſed. What

little, therefore, has been ſaid under its former character, will not apply to it in the latter.

In page 167, ſpeaking of the evangelical plan of Divine grace, you ſay, that "by the ſecret, peculiar, and efficacious operation of that alone, we can ever become the living members of that myſterious body, the church, of which JESUS CHRIST is the exalted head," &c.

Without denying the poſition, it may be ſaid, that it does not belong to the ſubject before me. You are ſpeaking of the myſterious body or inviſible church of CHRIST, which is made up of CHRIST's living members whereſoever diſperſed; I am ſpeaking of that *viſible* kingdom or church of CHRIST upon earth, into which Chriſtians are admitted by baptiſm. This kingdom or church upon earth contains within it both *living* and *dead* members; otherwiſe it would not correſpond with the compariſon applied to it by our SAVIOUR, of a net caſt into the ſea, gathering of every kind, both good and bad; which are to remain together till that final ſeparation, which is to take place between the wicked and the juſt, at the end of the world. MATT. xiii. 47.

It will be unneceſſary, SIR, to encroach further on your time, by any enlargement on a ſubject, which

has been already ſo ably handled by a celebrated Divine* of our church; whoſe diſcourſe upon the *inviſible* and *viſible* church of CHRIST you will thank me, I truſt, for recommending to your attention. Whatever idea then certain definitions of the inviſible church may have given riſe to in your mind, perſuaded I am, that the authors of them never deſigned that they ſhould militate againſt that order of government, by which the church as a ſociety is diſtinguiſhed, and to which every member of it is bound to pay obedience. For proof of this perſuaſion it will be ſufficient to adduce one inſtance.

The long quotation you have given from Biſhop REYNOLDS, applies to CHRIST's myſtical body in the *inviſible* church; but in his two ſermons on Zach. xi. 7, he ſpeaks as ſtrongly and as decidedly in favour of that government, neceſſary to the ſupport and welfare of CHRIST's *viſible* church, as almoſt any writer I know. "That Chriſtian policy (ſays he) and order, prudent, meek, religious government, is a very great bleſſing to the church of GOD, and greatly to be deſired; becauſe thereby unity and concord are preſerved among the ſheep of CHRIST, and, as by a fence or hedge, they are ſecured from the irruption

* ROGERS.

of wolves, who would devour and make a prey of them; and all leaven and chaff, which would ſour the lump, and corrupt the corn, is purged out, and fanned away. When the unruly are admoniſhed, and the weak ſtrengthened, and the feeble-minded comforted, and hereticks rejected, and diſorderly walkers made aſhamed; this greatly tendeth both to the honour, and to the health and ſafety, of the church of GOD."* But the members of an *inviſible* church cannot be ſubjects for human government: the good biſhop, therefore, is here ſpeaking of that government inſtituted by CHRIST, and exerciſed by his deputed miniſters, for the benefit of that *viſible* church, over which they are appointed to preſide. Conſequently, any paſſages taken from this biſhop's writings, which may appear to favour your way of thinking, with reſpect to independent ſocieties of Chriſtians aſſembling for the purpoſe of Divine worſhip, ought not, in fairneſs of conſtruction, or in juſtice to the meaning of the writer, to be taken, but in a conſiſtent ſenſe with the biſhop's explicit opinion upon this ſubject.

The object of your firſt letter being, as I underſtand it, to undermine and ſhake the foundation upon

* Biſhop REYNOLDS, fol. p. 1072.

which my "Guide to the Church" is built; by leading your reader to form a judgment of the church of CHRIST, very different from that which it was meant that he ſhould form, from the conſideration of the church of CHRIST upon earth being a *viſible* ſociety, under a divinely-inſtituted government; I have therefore thought myſelf called upon, in juſtice to my ſubject, to be ſomewhat particular in my reply to it.

There are ſtill ſome arguments, which belong immediately to this head, to be found in other parts of your book, which I purpoſely paſs over; becauſe, as they appear to me not to have been ſufficiently weighed, juſtice to my readers ſeems not to call upon me to enter into them.

Such arguments may be regarded in the light of invalid ſoldiers, againſt whom no generous enemy will direct an attack: their place is with the baggage. Should they be imprudently brought into the field, they ſerve only to impede the operation of efficient troops; and render that ſucceſs, to which they are unable to contribute, more doubtful than it otherwiſe might have been.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

LETTER III.

SIR,

DID I not believe the doctrines to which I have ſubſcribed my aſſent, and which, in the ſincerity of that ſubſcription, according to the meaſure of my abilities, I continue to inculcate on others, I ſhould be a diſhoneſt man; and which, thus cordially believing myſelf, did I not preach to others, I ſhould be worſe than diſhoneſt—I ſhould be unfaithful to the moſt ſolemn of all human engagements. With ſuch a profeſſion, and ſuch a practice, it is to be preſumed, that whatever openings may be inadvertently left for the drawing different concluſions from particular expreſſions, (and it is hardly poſſible for even the moſt experienced writers to be always ſo much on their guard, as not to be occaſionally miſunderſtood) the faith delivered by the church to her miniſters, as a ſtandard for their public doctrine, remains ſecure,

This is a conſideration which will have its weight with all candid minds; and, if it do not operate ſo far as to remove all ſuſpicion of infidelity, will at leaſt make the ſuſpecting party diffident of his opinion on the ſubject, and conſequently reſerved in his judgment.

The object propoſed to myſelf, in giving an anſwer to your Letters, was not ſo much that of aſcertaining and appreciating the propriety of the concluſions, as the weight of your arguments; leaving my reader, as much as may be, to the deciſion of his own judgment. Conſcious of my own fallibility, I ſhall always read with attention, and with a becoming deſire of correcting error, whatever may be written in oppoſition to any tenets I may maintain. At the ſame time I ſhall always, I truſt, poſſeſs that charity, which will diſpoſe me to give my opponent credit for the beſt intentions, ſhould nothing appear in his writing or conduct, which may juſtify me in withholding it. On the ſuppoſition, Sir, that you read with the ſame coolneſs that I write, and can give me as much credit as I am diſpoſed to give you; the concluſion, I flatter myſelf, will be, that we differ more in *words* than in *things*; and that, zealous as we both are for the promotion of genuine Chriſtianity, it is moſt probable that, whilſt our expreſſions,

which have been derived from our different habits of education, and the different authors we have reſpectively ſtudied, do not appear ſtrictly to correſpond, our meaning, upon ſome ſubjects at leaſt, may be nearly the ſame.

The ſubject of your ſecond letter is certainly of moſt eſſential importance. It contains, what muſt on all hands be allowed to be, the ground-work and ſubſtance of Chriſtianity. But my book not being intended to be a profeſſed treatiſe of Chriſtianity, the reader will not expect that I ſhould enter further into that ſubject, than to give an anſwer to thoſe obſervations, by which you have led him to conclude, that the doctrines of the church and of the miniſter are at variance with each other. As ſuch circumſtance, if true, muſt neceſſarily conſtitute an inſuperable objection to my book, I am called upon, in juſtice both to myſelf and my reader, to ſet it aſide.

"You have found (you ſay, page 39) a very material diſcord between them in the great points of election and juſtification." Should this be the caſe, the doctrine of the miniſter becomes an hereſy, for it is private opinion ſet up againſt eſtabliſhed doctrine; as ſuch it ought to be condemned.

But before ſentence be pronounced, feeling myſelf entitled to the character of a ſound and faithful miniſter of the word, I may be allowed to call for cool examination. You preſume, page 39, that I cannot really believe either the 9th or 10th articles of the church, becauſe I talk of ſomething being left to man to perform in the work of ſalvation, in order to entitle him to the reward of the Goſpel covenant. On this ſubject, it will be found that no more has been ſaid than what has been always underſtood to be the doctrine of our church, grounded upon the authority of ſcripture.

The ninth article of the church treats of *original* or *birth ſin*; by which is underſtood to be meant, that mental depravity entailed upon human nature in conſequence of the fall of ADAM; in the words of the article, "the fault and corruption of every man; whereby man is very far gone from original righteouſneſs, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; which natural inclination to evil deſerves GOD's wrath and damnation."

The doctrine, therefore, contained in this article, is this; that human nature has been corrupted, and that in that ſtate it deſerves puniſhment. In this ſtate every man is born, a fallen ſon of fallen ADAM:

and, although by baptiſm he is born into a new ſtate, a ſtate of grace and acceptance with GOD, through CHRIST; yet the infection of his nature ſtill remains; and ſo far as it doth remain, hath of itſelf the nature of ſin. The concluſion that has been generally drawn from this article is, that all mankind, conſidered in their natural condition, are in a ſtate of ſin and condemnation before GOD. And that one great object of CHRIST's meritorious office, was to take off the condemnation lying upon our ſpecies, and to place man in a ſtate of grace and acceptance with GOD, that "as in ADAM all die, ſo in CHRIST all ſhould be made alive."

In this light, admiſſion into Chriſtianity by baptiſm is to be conſidered as the putting man in a way, by which, through the operation of the Spirit, he may become ſo purified from his natural corruption, as to be qualified for the ſalvation which has been purchaſed for him.

The tenth article is but a corollary to the ninth. The doctrine contained in it is obvious, and briefly this; *that*, in conſequence of man's alienation from GOD, and ſpiritual things, he muſt, through CHRIST, have the grace of GOD to enable him both to will and to do good works, pleaſant and acceptable to GOD.

The ninth article deſcribes the natural ſtate of man, in conſequence of the fall; the tenth points out the remedy, by which alone he is to be recovered from it. This article profeſſes in its title to treat of *free-will.* By which term we underſtand, that although no man, in an *unregenerate* ſtate, has any free-will, but to do evil; being, whilſt in that ſtate, under ſubjection to his fallen nature; yet, by the grace of GOD in CHRIST, he poſſeſſes a degree of free-will towards the performance of ſpiritual ſervices, for the non-performance of which he will be accountable. For, the negative propoſition contained in this article, that no man has power to do good works, pleaſant and acceptable to GOD, *without* the grace of GOD, includes within it the poſitive one, viz. that *with that grace* good works, pleaſant and acceptable to GOD, may be performed by him. "I can do all things," &c. Phil. iv. 13. "I laboured more abundantly," &c. 1 Cor. xv. 10. "Work out your ſalvation," &c. Phil. ii. 12. A direction which furniſhes a plain comment upon the foregoing article, by making the aſſiſtance of Divine grace an argument for human exertion.

This article may be conſidered, then, as having a double aſpect: it looks to man in a ſtate of nature,

and in a ſtate of grace. In the former he can do no good works; in the latter he may, becauſe the ſpirit of GOD is vouchſafed to him for the purpoſe. When it is ſaid, therefore, that we have no power to do good works; it is not meant that man cannot contribute any thing towards the performance of Chriſtian duty, or that that duty is to be ſuſpended till he is ſure that he has neceſſary aſſiſtance: but he is therefore to attempt the performance of his duty with the moſt ſtrenuous exertion, becauſe he has full dependence on that aſſiſtance, which, as a child of GOD in CHRIST, he is entitled to receive in the proper uſe of the appointed means.

Now although ST. AUGUSTINE might occaſionally be warmed into ſaying ſome very ſtrong things in favour of the *Divine agency*, with the view of counteracting the Pelagian hereſy; yet I ſhould be inclined to think, that his deliberate judgment on this ſubject did not widely differ from that which has been here drawn from the article in queſtion. His words are theſe; "Si non eſt DEI gratia, quomodo ſalvat mundum? Si non eſt liberum arbitrium, quomodo judicat mundum? Quia iſta queſtio, ubi de *arbitrio* voluntatis et DEI *gratiâ* diſputatur, ita eſt ad diſcernendum difficilis, ut quando defenditur *liberum*

arbitrium, negari *Dei gratia* videatur; quando autem afferitur Dei gratia, liberum arbitrium putetur auferri."

To draw the line between theſe two diſtinct powers of *grace* and *free-will*, our church does not preſume; ſhe ſimply aſſerts, what, I truſt, every Chriſtian believes, that no man in his ſtate of nature can do good works; but that good works, *i. e.* virtuous actions upon Chriſtian principles, and as ſuch pleaſant and acceptable to God, may be performed by a man in a *ſtate of grace*. Theſe two powers are doubtleſs reconcilable in their nature, though we ſhort-ſighted mortals at preſent know not how perfectly to reconcile them. We receive the doctrine, therefore, as we do all other doctrines of a myſterious nature, without attempting to explain it. If the doctrine contained in this article tend to rouſe man to the actual performance of his baptiſmal engagement, conſidering himſelf as the agent in the work of ſalvation; at the ſame time that it keeps in view the power, by which alone he is enabled to exert himſelf in the important buſineſs; the article anſwers the deſign for which it was originally compoſed. Man is to work out his ſalvation, not becauſe of *himſelf* he is able ſo to do, but becauſe he is aſſiſted by that Being to whom all things are poſſible, and who "can enable him

both to will and to do of his good pleaſure." And, however difficult it may be to explain this in words, predicated as it is of GOD, we find no difficulty either in comprehending or believing, that though, like ſome other doctrines, it may be above reaſon, it is not contrary to it; perfectly conſiſtent with the attributes of GOD, and not incompatible with the free-agency of man.

And "it is ſurely of great importance to ſee all expreſſions about grace in ſuch a light, that they ſhall leave the efficacy of rewards and puniſhments undiminiſhed, and ſhall afford no pretence for remiſſneſs in ſpiritual diligence." Thus (to make uſe of the words of Dr. JORTIN) "do the doctrine of Divine grace and the doctrine of free-will unite and conſpire, in a friendly manner, to our everlaſting good. The firſt is adapted to excite in us gratitude, faith, and humility; the ſecond, to awaken our cautions and quicken our diligence." Concluſion of firſt Diſſertation.

Having given this plain account of the ſenſe in which I underſtand thoſe two articles, which you have been pleaſed to ſuppoſe I do not really believe; I proceed to the conſideration of the concluſion you have drawn from me.

You ſay, p. 40, "that the utmoſt I will allow CHRIST to have done for ſinners, is, that he has obtained for them a *poſſibility* of ſalvation; but their being made partakers of that ſalvation, and being brought into poſſeſſion of it, muſt depend on themſelves."

Upon this ſubject I ſay, what has been already ſaid under the foregoing comment on the ninth and tenth articles, that CHRIST in his mediatorial character took off the condemnation laying upon our ſpecies, redeeming fallen man from the curſe of the law, and placing him in a ſtate of grace and acceptance with GOD; in which ſtate he vouchſafes to him the aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, to enable him, by working out his ſalvation, to make his calling and election ſure. JESUS CHRIST, in his character of Saviour, has done two things for fallen man—he has removed *an incapacity*, and furniſhed a *capacity* for ſalvation. He has not only taken away the hand-writing that was againſt us, but has moreover provided means for the renewal of our fallen nature, on the proper uſe of which our final ſalvation depends. From whence it follows, that though the ſalvation of fallen man, wherever it takes place, is an act of free grace on the part of GOD; yet the certainty of that ſalvation depends, in ſome degree, on the uſe which man

makes of thoſe means of grace, which have been vouchſafed for the purpoſe of ſecuring it. "Every man (ſays Biſhop TAYLOR) walks upon two legs; one is firm, invariable, conſtant, and eternal, but the other is his own. GOD's promiſes are the object of our faith; but the events and final conditions of our ſouls, which is conſequent to our duty, can, at beſt, be but objects of our hope. And either there muſt in this be a leſs certainty, or elſe faith and hope are not two diſtinct graces. GOD's gifts and vocation are without repentance; meaning on GOD's part: but the very people, concerning whom ST. PAUL uſed the expreſſion, were reprobate and cut off, and in good time ſhall be called again; in the mean time, many ſingle perſons periſh. "There is no condemnation to them that are in CHRIST JESUS:" GOD will look to that, and it will never fail; but then they muſt ſecure the following period, and "not walk after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit." "Behold the goodneſs of GOD towards thee (ſaith ST. PAUL to the Gentile, in having called thee out of thy ſtate of nature into a ſtate of grace under the Goſpel;) if thou continue in his goodneſs, (by walking worthy of thy Chriſtian calling;) otherwiſe thou ſhalt be cut off." And if this be true, concerning the whole

church of the Gentiles, to whom the Apoſtles then made the addreſs, and concerning whoſe election the decree was public and manifeſt, that they might be cut off; and their abode in GOD's favour was upon condition of their perſeverance in the faith; much more is it true in ſingle perſons, whoſe election in particular is ſhut up in the abyſs, and permitted to the condition of our faith, and the revelations of doomſday." TAYLOR's Life of CHRIST, p. 400.

"Every one (you ſay, in page 40) who is taught of GOD, by the illumination of the ſpirit, that in *the fleſh dwelleth no* good thing; (in other words, that fallen man is naturally inclined to evil, and has in himſelf no power to do good works;) is thoroughly convinced that ſuch a *poſſibility* of ſalvation muſt end in an *impoſſibility* of ſalvation; by putting man in a much worſe ſtate under the new covenant of grace, than he was when under the old covenant of works. As faith and repentance are more out of the reach of men fallen, than perfect unſinning obedience was of man in innocence."

I may not, perhaps, rightly underſtand you; ſhould I therefore, Sir, miſinterpret your meaning in the foregoing paſſage, you will give me credit, I truſt, for no wilful deſign in ſo doing.

The "old covenant of works," and the "new covenant of grace," is common language, and as ſuch generally received. But on examination it will be found not ſtrictly correct. If by the "covenant of works" is to be underſtood (as from the contraſt here drawn between that and the "new covenant of grace," the reader is led to conclude) a covenant, in conſequence of which man had it in his power by *his own works* to acquire a right to immortality, it does not appear that any ſuch covenant ever exiſted. "The wages of ſin was *death*, but eternal life was the gift of GOD" from the beginning, and ſo has continued to be under every diſpenſation. By this free gift being originally ſuſpended on the condition of man's not eating of the forbidden tree, it became, on the part of GOD, a *covenant of grace*. Man under this covenant was man in innocence inveſted with powers, which doubtleſs rendered him capable of acting up to the condition required for the ſecurity of the ſtipulated reward.* In the experiment,

* That ſuch was the light in which this ſubject was ſeen in the primitive church, the reader will ſee abundantly proved in a learned diſcourſe "concerning the firſt Covenant," by Biſhop BULL. For my own reference to which, and my conſequent more perfect information on this ſubject, I conſider myſelf much indebted to the able Reviewer of the "*Appendix to the Guide*," in the Britiſh Critic for March 1800; to whom I thus publicly make my acknowledgment.

however, man fell; and with that fall this firſt covenant, or rather *diſpenſation of grace*, expired. A different plan of ſalvation was then revealed, and man in a fallen ſtate placed under *a new* covenant of grace. Under this covenant man as a fallen creature, no longer poſſeſſed of thoſe ſupernatural powers which originally diſtinguiſhed him as "created after the image of GOD," is become, ſtrictly ſpeaking, incapable of performing any thing available to ſalvation. Should he, therefore, depend upon himſelf, faith, repentance, and obedience, which are required of him under the new covenant, will be entirely out of his reach. But as faith, repentance, and obedience are the work of the Spirit in the human heart, they are therefore within the reach of fallen redeemed man, provided he do not reſiſt the work of the Spirit. The grace of GOD, which bringeth ſalvation, will be ſufficient to prepare man for it, if man be not wanting to himſelf on the occaſion.

In what you ſay, reſpecting the old covenant being all of works, and the ſecond all of grace, though the language, as it has been juſt obſerved, is incorrect, yet ſo far as it reſpects the *new covenant of grace*, our ſentiments, I flatter myſelf, will not be found widely different. The new covenant in CHRIST is

certainly all of grace, from the beginning to the end. It was the grace of GOD that provided ſalvation for fallen man; and nothing but the grace of GOD can prepare man for that ſalvation. So that if that grace and love, which before all worlds provided a recovery to the loſt favour of GOD through the medium of a Redeemer, do not alſo work in man that change of nature neceſſary to qualify him for it, "he muſt for ever remain at a diſtance from CHRIST, and a ſtranger to all hope of happineſs by him." The grace of GOD, therefore, is not more manifeſt in the original proviſion of ſalvation, than in the ſubſequent qualification of the party for it. Hence the grace of GOD in CHRIST is, when taken in this ſenſe, the Chriſtian's *all in all.* Preſuming, that it is not required that I ſhould ſpeak more decidedly on this ſubject, I paſs on.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for introducing the name of Mr. WILBERFORCE; as it gives me an opportunity of ſaying, what otherwiſe it is poſſible that gentleman may not know, (as I have been given to underſtand he has not read my book;) that I gave him full credit for holding all the eſſential truths of Chriſtianity, and was willing to flatter myſelf, that the difference between us was more in appearance

than in reality. The mention that was made of him, and of what he has written, in my book, was in a ſtile, that ought not, I conceive, to have given diſpleaſure to that gentleman's warmeſt admirers; nor was it to be ſuppoſed, from Mr. WILBERFORCE's manner of expreſſing himſelf in ſome parts of his work, that it would be unwelcome to him. The object in view was to ſubmit to that gentleman's conſideration, whether certain paſſages in his work, by being expreſſed in too *unguarded* a manner, might not lead to dangerous concluſions. Your comment upon your friend's performance, and fuller expoſition of its principles, have qualified me to form a more correct judgment of it than I had done before. His creed and yours, as far as they are to be aſcertained from what each has written, ſeem to be the ſame; at leaſt in thoſe points in which you have ſeen fit publicly to object to mine. Upon this ſuppoſition, what is ſaid to you upon the preſent ſubject may be conſidered as being likewiſe ſaid to him; and all I have to hope on this occaſion is, that nothing which may fall from me, in my further proſecution of this anſwer, will tend to put us at a further diſtance from each other, but rather to draw us nearer together;

for the agreement of religious men, if I may place myſelf in that number, ought to be mutually deſirable.

So much, indeed, has already been written upon this ſubject at different times, that nothing remains to be ſaid upon it, that can place it in a clearer light than that in which it now ſtands, in the judgment of all informed, impartial, and unprejudiced Chriſtians. It ſhall, therefore, be my endeavour to compreſs what may be neceſſary to bring forward, in anſwer to your letter, into the ſhorteſt compaſs.

When ſpeaking of faith, Mr. WILBERFORCE always means, you ſay, "that it is the firſt radical grace of the Holy Spirit, which takes place in the heart of a ſinner, and which brings with it pardon, reconciliation, and repentance; and never can exiſt, without producing the evangelical fruits of holineſs." Page 45.

If faith be taken for that *honeſt vital principle*, for which, in the Chriſtian ſenſe, it ought to be taken; it muſt, of courſe, produce thoſe fruits which are here deſcribed; it would not be *true faith*, if it did not. By faith, therefore, is here meant faith in the *concrete;* in other words, faith with all the neceſſary ingredients of which it muſt be compoſed to characteriſe its genuine quality. But as men are always

deceiving and being deceived, we muſt accommodate our language to their condition. Hypocrites are ever making pretenſions to principles which they do not poſſeſs. Such, you need not be informed, has been the caſe with reſpect to the doctrine of faith. For which reaſon, a certain diſcrimination has been found neceſſary in the uſe of this word; in order to prevent *nominal* Chriſtians from making a mere reliance on the promiſes of GOD through CHRIST (which may, *in ſome ſenſe*, be called faith) uſurp the place of that evangelical principle, which can alone be effectual to ſalvation. The hereſy that has grown out of this ſubject, was one of the firſt that diſturbed the Chriſtian church. It is ſo congenial to the deceitful heart of man, that it will ever continue to diſturb it more or leſs. ST. AUGUSTINE has told us, that the epiſtles of ST. JAMES, ST. PETER, ST. JOHN, and ST. JUDE, were written chiefly with the view to guard the faithful againſt its pernicious influence. "Contra eam maximè dirigunt intentionem, ut vehementer aſtruant, fidem ſine operibus nihil prodeſſe." AUG. de Fid. et Op. cap. 14.

So long, then, as vain pretenſions are liable to be ſet up by many who call themſelves Chriſtians, it is the duty of the watchmen of Iſrael to counteract

them; by making ſuch Chriſtians underſtand the difference between *faith* and *faith;* between that faith which qualifies for admiſſion into the Goſpel covenant, and that faith by which Chriſtians, in order to entitle them to the rewards of it, are expected to live, and by which their character is rendered complete. "The juſt ſhall live by faith:" that is, ſuch a faith as grows from ſtep to ſtep, till the whole righteouſneſs of GOD be fulfilled in it. "From faith to faith, (ſaith the Apoſtle) which ST. AUGUSTINE thus expounds; from faith *believing* to faith *obeying;* from *imperfect* faith to faith made *perfect* by the animation of charity; that he who *is juſtified* by his admiſſion into the covenant of grace by baptiſm, may be *juſtified ſtill* at the day of final retribution. For as there are ſeveral degrees and parts of juſtification, ſo there are ſeveral degrees of faith anſwerable to it; that in all ſenſes it may be true, that "by faith we are juſtified," and "by faith we live," and "by faith we are ſaved." For if we proceed from faith to faith, from *believing* to *obeying*; from faith in the *underſtanding* to faith in the *will;* from faith barely aſſenting to the revelations of GOD, to faith obeying the commandments of GOD; from the body of faith to the ſoul of faith, that is, to

faith formed and made alive by charity; then we ſhall proceed from juſtification to juſtification; *i. e.* from remiſſion of ſins in baptiſm to become the ſons of GOD; by which we become, firſt, partakers of the benefits of his death, and at laſt to an actual poſſeſſion of thoſe glories to which we were conſigned by the fruits of the Holy Ghoſt." TAYLOR's Life of CHRIST, page 206. In this ſenſe it is, that the holy JESUS is called by the Apoſtle the Author and Finiſher of our faith. He is the author of it, becauſe he is the principle upon which it is founded. He begins our faith in revelations, and perfects it in commandments. He leads us by the aſſent of our underſtanding, and finiſhes the work of his grace by enabling us to lead a holy life.

Having premiſed thus much, I proceed to the conſideration of thoſe pages, in which you have placed a preſbyter of the church of England in oppoſition to the church herſelf; which I am ſure you will pardon me, if I cannot help regarding as a very unſeemly ſight; and if, as ſuch, I am anxious to remove it.

The paſſages you have cited from the Articles and Homilies ſay no more than what I have already again and again avowed, that *true lively* Chriſtian faith muſt produce good works; for if it did not, it

would not be entitled to that diſtinction. The epithets *true* and *lively* added to faith appear deſigned to diſtinguiſh it from that *falſe* and *dead* faith, of which ST. JAMES ſpeaks, which ſubſtitutes nominal profeſſion for Chriſtian practice. It was in order to guard againſt this abuſe, that I obſerved that faith, *abſtractedly* conſidered, did not produce good works. It might, or it might not, according to the ſtate in which it was. If in a *lively* ſtate, that ſtate in which it is deſcribed in the Article and Homilies, and in which it ought to be, it muſt produce its correſpondent fruits. A tree, when in a lively vigorous ſtate, muſt, accidents excepted, produce fruit. But a tree may ſtill be a tree, though in that ſtunted ſtate as to be incapable of producing any fruit, and conſequently fit only for the fire. So long as there are profeſſors who take the *form* for the *ſubſtance* of Chriſtianity, ſuch a diſtinction between nominal and true faith will, it is preſumed, be neceſſary to be kept up. By the help of this ſimple explanation, the contradiction which you had found between the preſbyter and the church of England, will be eaſily reconciled.

The contradiction which you have diſcovered, between what I ſay, p. 287, reſpecting the unqualified manner in which faith is deſcribed, as the only cauſe

of man's ſalvation, and the Eleventh Article of our church, will, I truſt, find a no leſs eaſy ſolution.

The Eleventh Article ſays, that "we are accounted righteous before GOD only for the merits of our LORD JESUS CHRIST by faith, and not for our works and deſervings." Having ſubſcribed to this article, I muſt, if an honeſt man, aſſent to the foregoing propoſition. In what, then, do we diſagree? Our diſagreement, if any, appears to be a diſtinction without a difference. You ſay, man is juſtified *by faith only;* but then it is to be underſtood, that *that* faith is accompanied with its neceſſary appendages of repentance and good works; otherwiſe it cannot be juſtifying faith. Taking faith in this ſenſe, I ſay the ſame. Becauſe your faith comprehends under it thoſe qualities of repentance and obedience, which, in order to guard againſt that deception which has been continually taking place upon this ſubject, I have thought it neceſſary to *deſcribe ſeparately*, with the view of diſcriminating between faith conſidered ſimply as a nominal profeſſion, and its practical effects.

And I feel myſelf juſtified in making this diſcrimination by your own authority; for you ſay, p. 46, "that it is for want of conſidering theſe *different kinds of faith*, the one *dead*, the other *living*, that

ſo many have ſet two Apoſtles at variance." There are then, according to your own account, two different kinds of faith; and the manner in which harmony has been reſtored between the two ſuppoſed combatants, ST. PAUL and ST. JAMES, appears to be exactly ſimilar to that above adopted by myſelf, for the purpoſe of reconciling the doctrine of the preſbyter with that of the church of England.

"All preachynge and learnyng of the worde of GOD in CHRISTIS churche, ought to tende to this ende, that men maie be induced, not onely to knowe GOD, and to beleve and truſte in Hym, but alſo to honour and ſerve Hym with good workes." Such is the language of our church in the "Neceſſary Doctrine." "This is a faithful ſaying, and theſe things I will that thou affirm conſtantly, that they which have *believed in GOD*, might be careful to maintain good works. Theſe things are good and profitable unto men." TITUS iii. 8. Such is the language of ſcripture; and ſuch is the idea meant to be conveyed in my book, by the diſcrimination there made between *theoretical* and *practical* faith.

I am ſorry to obſerve, Sir, that when ſpeaking of ſalvation you object to the word *condition*. I do not underſtand the Bible, if it be not from beginning to

end a revelation of the *conditions* upon which fallen man may be ſaved.

In this caſe you are getting back upon the old ground, which was ſo often fought over by the Calviniſtic writers and the more ſober Puritans of the laſt century. FLAVEL, in his diſcourſe of errors, ſays, "An antecedent *condition* ſignifies no more than an act of ours; which, though it be neither perfect in any degree, nor in the leaſt meritorious of the benefit conferred, nor performed in our own natural ſtrength, is yet, according to the conſtitution of the covenant required of us, in order to the bleſſings conſequent thereupon by virtue of the promiſe; and conſequently benefits and mercies granted in this order are and muſt be ſuſpended by the donor till it be performed." WILLIAMS, in his Goſpel Truth vindicated from the extravagant doctrine of Calviniſts, writes thus: "The covenant, though *conditional*, is a diſpenſation of grace. There is a grace in giving ability to perform the *condition*; as well as the beſtowing the benefits. GOD'S enjoining the one in order to the other makes not the benefit to be leſs of grace; but it is a diſplay of GOD'S wiſdom, in conferring the benefit ſuitable to the nature and condition of men in this life, who are here in a ſtate of

trial: yea, the *conditions* are but a meetneſs to receive the bleſſings." "The reaſon why we uſe the word *condition* is, becauſe it beſt ſuits with man's relation to GOD in his preſent dealings with us as his ſubjects on trial for eternity. CHRIST as a prieſt has merited all, but as a prieſtly king he diſpenſeth all. He enjoins the *conditions* in order to the benefits; and makes the benefits motives to our compliance with the *conditions*. He treats with men as his ſubjects, whom he will rule, and after judge. Now what word is ſo proper to expreſs the duties, or enjoined means of benefit, as the word *conditions*? The word *conditions* is of the ſame nature as terms of the Goſpel. There are few authors of note, even of any perſuaſion, that ſcruple uſing this word in our ſenſe; as AMES, TWISS, RUTHERFORD, HOOKER, NORTON, PRESTON, OWEN, ſynod of New-England, the aſſembly of divines, &c. and none have reaſon to ſcruple it, except ſuch as think we are juſtified before we are born. Properly ſpeaking, the juſtification of man is the gracious act of GOD alone through JESUS CHRIST. The other parts of the Goſpel covenant, as faith, repentance, and good works through the operation of the Spirit, are the *conditions* on which GOD engages to vouchſafe that juſtification."

The above poſition is, I preſume, in ſtrict conformity with the Eleventh Article, which ſays, that "we are accounted righteous only for the merit of our LORD," &c. It afterwards ſays, that "we are juſtified by *faith only*." Now according to the obſervation of a learned profeſſor,* we cannot be juſtified by *two* things, and by each of them *only*. To make the article therefore ſpeak a conſiſtent language, it muſt be conſidered, that we are accounted righteous or juſtified *only propter meritum DOMINI*, according to the Latin; *i. e.* for, on account of, or for the ſake of, the merit of the LORD; *per fidem* by faith, conſidered as the *means* through which we attain to that juſtification; or the *condition* on which we are made partakers of it.

Now, Sir, you may call faith the *inſtrument* by which the ſinner lays hold on the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; I call it the *condition*, on which he is made partaker of it. But if we both mean the ſame thing, as, it is to be preſumed, we do; namely, that faith, conſidered in its complete evangelical ſenſe, is the *ſine qua non* in Chriſtianity, that without which there is no ſalvation under the covenant of grace; why ſhould we fall out by the way, for a mere dif-

* Dr. HEY.

ference of expreſſion? The quotation which you have brought from the Homily, in which it is ſaid, that "man is ſaved freely in CHRIST, without works, by faith only;" applies to the divines who hold the doctrine which this Homily was meant to oppoſe. The Roman Catholic church maintains, that *good works* contribute in a degree as a *meritorious* cauſe to man's ſalvation! This is one of thoſe groſs errors which Proteſtants removed at the Reformation. When the Homily, therefore, in conformity with our article, ſays, that man is ſaved freely *without works*; the expreſſion implies, not that good works are to be omitted in the plan of Goſpel ſalvation, but that they are not to be conſidered as the *meritorious* cauſe of it. According to the doctrine of the church of England, they are neceſſary, as parts of the *condition* upon which the free grace of GOD has been ſuſpended, and as the evidence by which our title to that grace in our final juſtification will ultimately be determined.

My only object, in adding a ſingle word to the many ſolid and ſatisfactory anſwers that from time to time have been given to a cavil, (for in truth I can hardly honour it with the name of an objection) was, that I might, if poſſible, effectually remove a

ſtumbling-block, which I fondly hoped had long ago been removed; that even the moſt rigid Calviniſts might hereafter forbear to object to our ſignificant and inoffenſive term *condition*, that it is an encroachment on the freedom of Divine grace.

But having no reaſon to think that the authority of ſo obſcure an individual as myſelf will have much weight, I am happy in appealing to thoſe celebrated Divines to whom we both look up; I mean, the late excellent Biſhop HORNE, whom I obſerve with pleaſure you mention with reſpect and gratitude in page 135, and the preſent Biſhop of Rocheſter, whoſe name you have introduced alſo with reſpect in a note in page 44 of your book. The former, in a ſermon preached before the Univerſity of Oxford, has theſe words:—

" I call works a *neceſſary condition* of our juſtification; becauſe moſt certain it is, that the only meritorious cauſe thereof is the ſatisfaction of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who alone, by his moſt precious blood ſhed upon the croſs, hath obtained for us remiſſion of ſins and eternal life. But in the Goſpel covenant, to which we are now admitted by baptiſm, faith and works are the *conditions;* to the performance of which, through the power of

his grace, GOD has annexed the promiſes of redemption; and *without* the performance of which, a right to thoſe promiſes can neither be acquired nor preſerved. *That faith is ſuch a neceſſary condition*, all Chriſtians are agreed." The whole diſcourſe from which the above extract is taken, appears to me to be well worthy your ſerious attention.

" Next to the homilies of our church on juſtification, (you ſay, in page 44) I have ſeen no human compoſition more clear and ſatisfactory on the ſubject than the charge delivered by the preſent Biſhop of Rocheſter, when he held the ſee of St. DAVID." With this excellent charge I have long been acquainted. There is nothing in it to which I do not cordially aſſent. Upon the ſubject of juſtification, I think, moreover, there is nothing in it that is not, in ſubſtance at leaſt, to be found in my book. No ſuch merit is aſcribed by me to the good works of men, as may claim immortality as the wages of our ſervice; nor is any power aſcribed to man to perform works truly good without the aſſiſtance of the Divine Spirit. " Chriſtian fruit, (I ſay) can only grow on the Chriſtian tree;" page 279. The Biſhop ſays, 'There is no hope from any merit of our own, but through the efficacy of our LORD's atonement.'

"Properly ſpeaking, (I ſay) the juſtification of man is the gracious act of GOD alone, through JESUS CHRIST." In order to guard againſt the deception of nominal profeſſors, I have repreſented faith with its proper accompaniments, not as the *meritorious* cauſe of ſalvation, but the condition upon which it is ſuſpended. The Biſhop, as a preſervative from the contagion of the Anti-nomian folly, recommends the *Harmonia Apoſtolica of Biſhop* BULL, from whence two or three decided paſſages were brought forward in my book, for the purpoſe of proving, what it was the profeſſed object of that treatiſe to prove, the *conditionality* of man's ſalvation through CHRIST. Perfectly agreed as we are, I am at ſome loſs to account for the different opinions you entertain of the Biſhop of Rocheſter and myſelf, relative to this ſubject. If want of ability on my part has prevented my expreſſing myſelf ſo forcibly and ſo ſatisfactorily as the learned Biſhop has done, I flatter myſelf it will be found, that, with proper attention on the part of the reader, however different our language, our ideas are the ſame. But this mode of *conditional* ſalvation, which certainly has been revealed in the bible, "reverſes (you think) the whole Goſpel plan of redemption for man, as a guilty, unworthy, helpleſs

ſinner; and makes none partakers of it, who do not bring with them faith, repentance, and good works, through the operation of the Holy Ghoſt." Permit me to aſk, would you have any partakers of ſalvation, who do not bring theſe Chriſtian qualifications with them? Aſſuredly not; you will readily anſwer. But then the bringing theſe qualifications, as conditions upon which men are to be made partakers of ſalvation, is, in your idea, to reverſe the free plan of Goſpel ſalvation through CHRIST. It is neither more or leſs than to ſay, in your words, "Bring with you your price of terms, qualifications, and conditions, and call them what you pleaſe, and then GOD will certainly give you juſtification *gratis*."

Reſpect for the writer ſometimes obliges me to give an anſwer to remarks and obſervations, which appear on no other account to require an anſwer. I proceed therefore to aſk, do not the words *price* and *condition* convey two diſtinct ideas? By paying down the price of a commodity, a claim of *right* to that commodity is acquired, for which I am indebted to no one; it is my own, I have bought it with a price. If a favour, to which there is no title, but what is derived from the free good-will of a benefactor, ſhould be offered to me, upon my com-

pliance with *certain conditions*, the fulfilment of thoſe *conditions* gives me a *claim of grace;* a claim not founded upon the *merit* of my performance, but upon the *promiſe* that has been received. Is the favour leſs freely granted on the part of my benefactor, becauſe I have complied with the *conditions* upon which he engaged to grant it? Many of the ſubjects of the King in Ireland have lately been in rebellion. As rebels, their lives are forfeited to the ſtate. The King, in mercy to his deluded people, has publiſhed an Act of Grace, by which a free pardon is offered to all who will lay down their arms and return to their allegiance. Do theſe *conditions*, on which the pardon of rebels is in this caſe ſuſpended, alter the nature of that pardon, conſidered as an act of *free grace* on the part of the King? Again, Sir, a rich houſeholder provides a ſumptuous banquet, of which the poor of all deſcriptions are invited to partake, "*without money* and *without price.*" All that is required is, to prevent the table being diſgraced by a filthy and beggarly appearance, and to preſerve an uniformity among the gueſts, that they come clothed in garments provided by the founder of the feaſt for the purpoſe; theſe garments entitle them to a ſeat at the table. Should any preſume to ap-

pear without the garments ſo required and graciouſly provided, they certainly would not be admitted as gueſts. Is the entertainment which has been thus provided for the poor leſs an act of *free grace* on the part of the provider, becauſe the partaking of it has been ſuſpended upon a *certain condition?*— Theſe alluſions are in conformity with the ſcripture, and require, it is preſumed, no application.

Being deſirous of treſpaſſing as little upon your time as poſſible, I was in hopes that nothing remained in your ſecond letter, to which any reply was yet neceſſary. But as the concluſion drawn in your 56th page is founded in error, it may not be proper to paſs it over unnoticed; eſpecially, as by the logical form in which your arguments are clothed, they ſeem to carry the appearance of ſound reaſoning. "Now, Sir, (you ſay, addreſſing yourſelf to me) "into what a difficulty have you brought yourſelf? You ſubſcribe to this excellent article, which affirms, that works done before juſtification have in them the nature of ſin, and are not acceptable to GOD; and yet you ſay that works are neceſſary, as conditions to juſtification."

Not aware of having brought myſelf into any difficulty upon this occaſion, I rather think it will be

found, that you, Sir, have concluded too haſtily, without having paid proper attention to the article in queſtion, taken in connection with its preceding one. The thirteenth article ſays, that "works done before the grace of CHRIST, and the inſpiration of the Spirit, are not pleaſant to GOD; foraſmuch as they proceed not of faith in CHRIST." If now we look back upon the article immediately preceding, we ſhall ſee, that "good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after juſtification, *are pleaſing and acceptable* to GOD in CHRIST, as they ſpring out neceſſarily of a true and lively faith." Here is an eſſential difference between *works* and *works:* between the works of an *unconverted Heathen*, and thoſe of the *baptized Chriſtian*; between works performed *before* the grace of CHRIST, and works performed in *conſequence* of that grace.

The *firſt* are not pleaſant to GOD, becauſe they poſſeſs not the property which make Chriſtian good works pleaſing, they do not proceed of faith in JESUS CHRIST; therefore they cannot qualify for juſtification. The *latter* are pleaſing and acceptable to GOD for the very oppoſite reaſon; and therefore are required to be performed as *conditions* to juſtification. All the difficulty in this caſe appears to

have arisen from your not having paid sufficient attention to the sense in which the word *justification* is used in the articles here alluded to. The word *justification*, as it was used at the Reformation, was considered as synonimous with baptism. In CRANMER's Necessary Doctrine, in the article of justification, *baptism* is mentioned as the "way by which GOD hath determined, that man, being of age and coming to Christendom, should be *justified*." In the Homily on Salvation (3d part) it is said, "Our duty is not to pass the time of this present life unfaithfully and idly, after that we are *baptized* or justified." According to this idea, by our *justification* is primarily to be understood our admission into Christianity, because it was sometimes used in that sense by the sacred writers. The Apostles preached to grown persons, to prejudiced Jews, and unconverted Heathens. The substance of their doctrine was salvation through CHRIST. Whosoever could be brought to profess their faith in CHRIST, as their only Saviour, was immediately *baptized*; by which service he was *justified freely* from all the sins of his corrupt nature, and placed in a new state of grace and acceptance with GOD. This admission into the Christian covenant is sometimes distinguished by the

title of man's *firſt juſtification*; and becauſe by this juſtification man is placed in a way to be eternally happy, he is therefore frequently ſaid to be *then ſaved*. "By grace are ye ſaved," ſays the Apoſtle, Eph. ii. 8; which, Mr. LOCKE has ſhewn in a note on the text, well worth your attention, applies to *admiſſion into the Goſpel Covenant*. "Man (ſays a learned Profeſſor*) "is *juſtified*, either when delivered from the ſlavery of ſin, and put into a way of obtaining happineſs, under the Chriſtian religion; which is ſometimes called *being ſaved*; or when at laſt his ſalvation is fixed for eternity. As theſe two inſtances of the juſtification of mankind have been ſometimes confounded, and the confuſion has occaſioned diſpute, divines and our church have called the admiſſion into Chriſtianity our *firſt juſtification*, and our ſalvation after death our *final juſtification*." HEY'S Lectures, art. xi. ſect. 14. The foregoing remark ſolves, I preſume, the apparent difficulty here alluded to; and will, I truſt, leave us perfectly reconciled upon this ſubject. I am not very ſorry, however, that the difficulty has been ſtated; becauſe it has given me an opportunity of explaining a word,

* Dr. HEY.

which is much abuſed by ſome ill-formed Chriſtians, who conceive it as giving a title to eternal happineſs, which cannot be forfeited; a conceit which has enthuſiaſm for its parent, but which receives not the leaſt countenance, either from the letter of ſcripture, or the doctrine of our church.*

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

* The Reader will find the ſubject of this Letter more fully, and I truſt, ſatisfactorily handled in anſwer to Mr. OVERTON's objections, in chap. vi. on the Doctrine of Juſtification in "*Vindiciæ Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ;*" in which ſome of the falſe reaſonings, incorrect ſtatements, and palpable miſrepreſentations, in a publication entitled "The True Churchman aſcertained," are pointed out.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

IT is not without ſome conſiderable degree of reluctance that I enter upon your third letter, becauſe it is on a ſubject on which I entertain but ſlender hopes that we can ever agree; and ſtrongly diſinclined, as I am, to diſpute with a reſpectable man, I cannot help wiſhing it had not been introduced. Indeed I ſee no good purpoſe that can be anſwered by any diſcuſſion of a ſubject, on which no complete ſatisfaction can be gained; becauſe no *data* have been vouchſafed to man, by which his judgment on it can decidedly be determined. Hence it is that good men on both ſides have formed, and will continue to form upon this ſubject, according to the light in which they have been accuſtomed to ſee it, very different opinions. The only rule that I know of, by which Chriſtian conduct ſhould be governed under ſuch circumſtances, muſt be a rule ſimilar to that laid down

by the Apoſtle for the direction of his diſciples upon another occaſion. "Let not him that eateth deſpiſe him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth." Let a mutual toleration of opinion take place among Chriſtians upon this controverted ſubject; and let them not think the worſe of each other's ſpiritual condition, becauſe they do not perfectly agree upon it; and all will be well. In ſuch caſe, the Calviniſt and Anti-Calviniſt may meet together in the ſame communion; confident that whilſt the bond of charity remains unbroken between them, and they continue in the ſame Chriſtian fellowſhip, GOD will receive them both.

The anſwer which our SAVIOUR made to the queſtion, "LORD, are there few that be ſaved?" is applicable to the preſent ſubject; becauſe it is calculated to check impertinent curioſity, and to direct the attention of man in the great work of his ſalvation to its proper object. "Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for many ſhall ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able."

The ſecret things are to be left to that Being to whom they belong: they reſpect GOD's government of the world, not man's government of himſelf; they are, conſequently, not proper ſubjects for human

ſpeculation. Of the *former* we can know no more than what has been revealed, and that has been too little to qualify us to pronounce a decided judgment upon the future condition of any; with reſpect to the *latter*, we know enough, from the precepts and promiſes contained in the Goſpel, to direct the conduct and eſtabliſh the faith of every pious Chriſtian.

With theſe, therefore, the attention of the Chriſtian may be ſafely engroſſed; becauſe, without any unprofitable diverſion of the human mind, they lead to a certain event; for the ſecret will of GOD doubtleſs correſponds with that which has been revealed, and Divine decrees and Divine promiſes will ultimately be found in perfect harmony with each other. Now whatever imperfect ideas we may form, (and imperfect they muſt be, while "we ſee through a glaſs darkly") of the Divine decrees, we muſt ſtill obſerve, that all promiſes ſuppoſe the parties to whom they are made poſſeſſed of a certain degree of freedom; otherwiſe promiſes of pardon and favour upon certain implied conditions would not be ſo much *acts of grace* as *acts of mockery*. The reconciliation of theſe two apparently diſcordant ſubjects may be left to that Divine Power, whoſe office it will be to judge the world in righteouſneſs; whilſt man muſt be governed,

not by thoſe indiſtinct intimations of the Divine will upon which ſufficient light has not been vouchſafed to qualify him to form a judgment, but by thoſe *poſitive declarations of it* which have been *clearly revealed.* For it is eaſy to be conceived, that a thing may be according to the will of GOD in two ſenſes; either as He permits it, or as He chooſes it ſhould be done; in the former ſenſe, it may be underſtood of that ſecret will which accompanies, in certain caſes, the diſpoſitions of Divine Providence in the world; in the latter, of that revealed will which was deſigned to be a ſtandard for the regulation of human conduct.

Such has been the idea which I have always entertained, conſidering the Divine decrees to be a myſterious ſubject, with which man has nothing to do. At the ſame time I pronounce no cenſure upon thoſe who venture to ſpeak more decidedly than I can think myſelf authoriſed to ſpeak, being contented to contemplate in reverential ſilence a ſubject which I profeſs myſelf incompetent to explain.

The principle by which ST. AUGUSTINE was governed, in the original eſtabliſhment of the doctrine Divine decrees, and by which doubtleſs many pious perſons are ſtill governed in the ſupport of it, every Chriſtian muſt reſpect, becauſe it originated in a lau-

dable zeal of oppoſition to a great and notorious error. It has however, I believe, been generally thought, that AUGUSTINE, with the view of maintaining the univerſality of the Divine agency againſt the ſuppoſed independent will of the creature, took the texts of ſcripture on which the doctrine of predeſtination has been founded, in a ſenſe different from that in which, in conformity with the context, they ought to be taken. Certain it is, that neither ST. AUGUSTINE, nor the other principal patrons of this doctrine, have maintained an uniform conſiſtency upon it: a circumſtance, which will have weight with all conſiderate perſons, and prevent them from ſpeaking with too great confidence upon a ſubject, which has never yet been placed upon ground ſo firm as not to be ſhaken.

In fact, Sir, the points which conſtitute the ſubject of your third letter, have been diſputed in the church from the days of ST. AUGUSTINE down to the preſent time; and will continue to be ſo, whilſt men are leſs intent in forming correct notions in divinity from the general tenour of revelation, than in accommodating particular parts of it to their own pre-conceived opinions.

Your apprehenſion, that our church is ſlipping back into Popery, is, I truſt, groundleſs. Popery to me appears to be in that ſtate of decline, that there is more reaſon to hope, that intelligent Papiſts will come over to the church of England, than there is ground to fear that proteſtants will fall back to the church of Rome. But, Sir, as your concluſion in this caſe appears to be derived from the general prevalence of thoſe doctrines which you profeſs to oppoſe, and againſt which you ſo loudly inveigh; it may be proper to remind you, that ſome of the brighteſt ornaments of the church of England who maintained thoſe doctrines, were at the ſame time the moſt determined and powerful oppoſers of the errors of Popery, that this nation ever produced. And this is a caſe in point, which proves, that the great men here alluded to could clearly diſcriminate between the doctrines of *Popery*, and the doctrines of *Calviniſm*; and did not conſider their zealous oppoſition to the *former*, to be in any wiſe inconſiſtent with their decided rejection of the *latter*.

I know that the charge of Popery is reviving againſt the proteſtant church of this country; and with the ſame deſign, I fear, that it was induſtriouſly propagated at a former period of our hiſtory, when

it was made preparatory to the projected downfall of our eſtabliſhment. To hear ſeparatiſts connecting the idea of Popery with that of our national church, is no ſubject for ſurpriſe; reaſoning from paſt events to future ſucceſs, they act conſiſtently. But to find any one who profeſſes attachment to the conſtitution of his country, both in church and ſtate, and whoſe ſituation in life adds weight to his opinions, giving countenance to an idea that has once been ſo fatally abuſed, is a circumſtance that cannot but be ſincerely lamented.

But as the foregoing conſiderations do not appear to have produced that influence upon your mind which might have been expected; and as, from a deſire of your bearing teſtimony to what you conceive to be the truth, you ſtill perſiſt in the ſame plan, which you adopted in a much earlier ſtage of life, of diſparaging, vilifying, and uncharitably deſpiſing all perſons who do not ſee the doctrine of the church in the exact point of view in which you have been accuſtomed to ſee it; it becomes neceſſary that I ſtand upon my defence, leſt it ſhould be ſuppoſed that I plead guilty to your charge.

It is an evil of conſiderable magnitude in the world, particularly ſo, as it offends againſt that uni-

verſal rule of charity by which Chriſtians ought to be governed, that perſons attached to a certain ſyſtem of doctrine are too apt to draw harſh concluſions, with reſpect to the conduct and principles of thoſe, who differ from them in opinion. This is an evil which, though it may be corrected by ſound ſenſe and accurate information, is nevertheleſs to be lamented; becauſe, generally ſpeaking, it precludes all ſober and rational inveſtigation of the point in diſpute, by ſubjecting the parties to that tyranny of prejudice, which will not leave them at liberty to yield to conviction. In this diſpoſition of mind all arguments are uſeleſs; they are weighed, not in the ſcale of *reaſon*, but of *paſſion*; and whilſt paſſion holds the ſcale, there is no hope that any ſubject of difference will ever be brought to a proper deciſion.

This perverſion of the underſtanding, how great a reproach ſoever it may be to men of liberal education, is alas! but too common; we daily have to lament its effects. But, though we both know the cauſe, and can preſcribe the remedy, it is but ſeldom a cure is completed. With theſe ideas before me, I muſt confeſs myſelf to be without hope that any thing that may be ſaid in this letter will prevail upon you to repudiate thoſe opinions, to which you have been ſo

long wedded, and to which, ſo far as I can judge from your mode of expreſſing yourſelf upon them, your attachment is indiſſoluble.

The concluſion drawn at the end of your third letter, by which, according to the tenour of the fifth canon, you make me liable to excommunication, as "an impugner of the eſtabliſhed religion, and not to be reſtored but upon a public revocation of what you are pleaſed to call my wicked errors," ſtands upon the ground, that the doctrine of election and predeſtination in the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe is the doctrine of the church of England. Should your premiſes in this caſe be well founded, every attempt to ſet aſide your concluſion will be vain, and of courſe I ſtand condemned.

But it may be aſked, by what competent authority has it been determined, that the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of election and predeſtination is the *genuine* ſenſe of the church of England? For my own part, I know of none. And I have always conſidered the Calviniſtic ſenſe of theſe doctrines not to be the genuine ſenſe of our church, but a ſenſe which has been impoſed upon her by divines, who ſuffered themſelves to be governed more by the ſound of words than they ought to have been; and have been thereby led,

with the view of ſupporting a favourite hypotheſis, to ſtrain certain parts of ſcripture beyond their original meaning.

Indeed with the Liturgy of the church of England before me, it is always a ſubject of ſurpriſe, how any perſons profeſſing the characteriſtic principles of Calviniſm can conſcientiouſly make uſe of a compoſition, which in ſuch numberleſs parts appears to be at decided variance with them. But excluſive of the poſitive proofs which are to be brought forward on this head, there is a circumſtance of a negative kind, as a learned Biſhop* has remarked, "which is true, not only of the doctrine under immediate conſideration, but alſo of the doctrines which are contained with it. There is not in any part of our Common Prayer Book a ſingle expreſſion, which can be fairly interpreted as aſſerting or recognizing any one of the peculiar doctrines of Calviniſm. Redemption is never declared to be irreſpectively partial; human co-operation is never excluded where the influence of the ſpirit is mentioned: Divine grace is never conſidered as irreſiſtible, or indefectible: good works are never repreſented as unneceſſary to ſalvation: and ſenſible impulſes of the ſpirit are no where acknowledged in

* Biſhop of Lincoln's Charge, 1803.

our liturgy. The fact is, that the introduction of Calviniſm, or rather its prevalence in any conſiderable degree, was ſubſequent to the beginning of Queen ELIZABETH's reign, when all our public formularies, our Articles, our Liturgy, and our Homilies, were ſettled as they now are, with the exception of a few alterations and additions to the Liturgy not in the leaſt affecting its ſpirit and character. Our reformers followed no human authority, they had recourſe to the ſcriptures themſelves as their ſole guide; and the conſequence has been what might have been expected, that our articles and liturgy do not exactly correſpond with the ſentiments of any of the eminent reformers upon the continent, or with the creeds of any of the proteſtant churches which are there eſtabliſhed." Hence the learned Biſhop moſt juſtly (in my opinion at leaſt) concludes, "Our church is not Lutheran—it is not Calviniſtic—it is not Arminian —it is *ſcriptural.* It is built upon the Apoſtles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone."

You are not, perhaps, to be informed, that when this doctrine, now diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Calviniſtic,* was firſt broached by the great ST. AUGUSTINE of Hippo, it met with ſuch oppoſition, that it

was even reckoned an *hereſy;* which the veneration for that great man led its oppoſers to ſay, had originated, "ex AUGUSTINI verbis malè intellectis." You may moreover know, what a flame this view of Divine truth raiſed in the Gallican church four hundred years after ST. AUGUSTINE's death, when divines of equal eminence and reputation for piety and learning were to be found among its ſtrenuous ſupporters and opponents. At leaſt, Sir, you cannot be ignorant, that after CALVIN, among his other ſingularities, had broached this doctrine anew, it was attacked by the learned VAN HARMIN, profeſſor of divinity in the univerſity of Leyden; and that his followers, who carried on the attack after his death, were borne down, not by *theological argument*, but by the *civil power* at the ſynod of Dort. Where the foundation, then, is confeſſedly ſo unſound, the ſuperſtructure cannot be ſo ſolid as to be truſted in with ſafety.

The quotations you have brought to eſtabliſh this doctrine from Archbiſhop USHER, Biſhop BABINGTON, DAVENANT, and Dr. EDWARDS, prove juſt as much as your letter upon this ſubject proves; but nothing towards aſcertaining the genuine ſenſe of the church of England upon it. You might have brought a volume of ſimilar quotations from the divines who

lived in Queen ELIZABETH's and King JAMES's reigns; and a volume of quotations of an oppoſite tendency may be brought from divines of at leaſt equal reſpectability, who have lived ſince that period. But what other end could be anſwered by ſuch an accumulation of evidence, than that of proving, what every man who is acquainted with the Engliſh hiſtory knows already, that at a particular period a large portion of the great body of the clergy of our church were *Calviniſtically* inclined, and that therefore it was very natural for ſuch men to ſee the doctrines of the church to which they belonged, as you now do, through that medium; and that at a ſubſequent period of the ſame hiſtory the divines of our church, by adopting a better and more rational plan of ſtudying divinity than that which had been for ſome time in uſe, were qualified to do more juſtice to the good ſenſe and conſiſtency of our reformers than had been done for a century before.

But the point in queſtion is not to be determined in this way; you have your opinions, and I have mine; but our opinions conſtitute no ſtandard for aſcertaining the doctrines of the church of England. The church of England muſt ſpeak for herſelf; and when ſhe does, her members are bound to conform

to *her* judgment; not to the judgment of thoſe, who make their own private opinions the doctrine of the church, and the only ſtandard of orthodoxy.

Whether the genuine doctrine of the church of England be *Calviniſtic* or not, is not ſo much a matter of *opinion* as of *fact*, which is to be determined, as other facts, by proper evidence. This fact has been determined by perſons competent to the undertaking. And I have not heard, that the authority of Biſhop BULL, Dr. WATERLAND, LESLEY, and Dean TUCKER, not to mention other writers on this ſubject, has been ſet aſide by any Calviniſtic writer, who ventured to reaſon upon it.

But in your caſe there is no need of appeal to ſuch authority; for the fact in queſtion has been proved to demonſtration, in publications profeſſedly addreſſed to yourſelf by Dr. NOWELL, late principal of St. Mary-Hall in Oxford, and the late pious Mr. FLETCHER. Whoever reads thoſe publications, will find in them more than an anſwer to all that has been ſaid to me; and on laying down his book, will only feel at a loſs which to be ſurpriſed at moſt, the defection of your memory, or the ſteady and unabating perſeverance with which you ſupport a cauſe,

againſt which ſuch weight of evidence has been repeatedly brought forward.

The little ſucceſs that has attended the earneſt endeavours of thoſe, whoſe profeſſed object it was to convince you that you had miſrepreſented the doctrine of the church of England, and who were at the ſame time ſo well qualified for the taſk they undertook, renders it unneceſſary that I ſhould retrace the ground that they have ſo ably trodden. If proofs drawn from the moſt authentic ſources, in direct contradiction to the doctrine you maintain, will not tend to alter your opinion upon it, the leſs that is written upon this ſubject the better. With this idea in view, my object will be to bring into the ſhorteſt compaſs what I have to ſay on the preſent ſubject, by adverting only to thoſe few ſtriking circumſtances, which appear ſufficient of themſelves to determine the judgment of every reaſonable man.

There are certain poſitions which require only to be plainly ſtated to be generally received; becauſe, being ſelf-evident, they ſtand in no need of proof. Of this kind are theſe two following; that our reformers, in the articles, homilies, and liturgy, in laying down a collected ſyſtem of Chriſtian doctrine, did not mean to contradict themſelves. Conſequently,

that our church, in the ſubſcription to her articles, does not require a profeſſion of faith from her clergy *different* from that which they are taught to preach to their congregations in the eſtabliſhed liturgy.

From theſe poſitions being granted, it follows that there muſt be a conſiſtency between our *articles*, *homilies*, and *liturgy;* and conſequently that attempts to ſet them at variance with each other muſt ariſe from partial extracts being taken in a ſenſe different from that which was annexed to them by their original compoſers. Let us now proceed to a ſhort application of the foregoing poſitions.

By the doctrine of election and predeſtination in the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe is underſtood the *abſolute* and *unconditional* election and predeſtination of certain individuals to eternal life, in excluſion of all others, in conſequence of a Divine decree that has been paſſed in their favour before the world began; by virtue of which decree, (to make uſe of the words of Archbiſhop USHER, whoſe authority has been brought to your ſupport, p. 78) "GOD, according to his good pleaſure, hath moſt certainly decreed every (both) thing and action, whether paſt, preſent, or to come; and not only the things and actions themſelves, but alſo all their circumſtances of place and time,

means, manner, and end, ſo that they ſhall not come to paſs in any other place or time than He hath ordained; and then and there they ſhall come to paſs *neceſſarily*."

Without ſtopping to paſs any comment upon this doctrine, becauſe it appears to ſpeak enough for itſelf, I proceed to proof. King Edward VI. came to the throne in the year 1547. Soon after which period, a ſet of homilies were compoſed by CRANMER for the direction of the clergy. A paraphraſe of the New Teſtament was alſo about the ſame time ordered to be ſet up in all churches for general information; and in the year 1551, the articles and liturgy, nearly as they now ſtand, were compoſed. This reformation and eſtabliſhment of the doctrine of the church of England were chiefly projected and completed by CRANMER, RIDLEY, and LATIMER, aſſiſted by other Divines of ſimilar principles.

CRANMER had given the moſt decided proof, in the year 1540, that he was *no Calviniſt*; becauſe by the book put forth by him and other divines, called the *Erudition of a Chriſtian Man*, the doctrines of grace and free-will are explained in a ſenſe totally incompatible with the *Calviniſtic* tenets; and the doctrine of *univerſal* redemption, in

direct contradiction to your *partial* redemption, is *unequivocally* maintained.

The publication of the late principal of St. Mary-Hall, above alluded to, renders it unneceſſary for me to detain you with extracts to prove what has been here advanced on the ſubject of CRANMER.

It may only be obſerved further, that CRANMER paid the higheſt regard to MELANCTHON's opinion; and that the ſeventeenth article was expreſsly drawn up againſt the rigid doctrine of predeſtination, in conſequence of a particular communication between thoſe two celebrated divines on that head. MELANCTHON's words, in an epiſtle to CRANMER, in the year 1548, (three years before our articles were finiſhed) were theſe; "Nimis horridæ fuerunt initio *ſtoicæ diſputationes* apud noſtros *de fato*, et diſciplinæ nocuerunt. Quare te rogo, ut de tali aliquâ formulâ doctrinæ cogites?" What was MELANCTHON's opinion on the ſubject of predeſtination, to which the foregoing paſſage evidently alludes, is manifeſt, from the Augſburg Confeſſion; in which, after aſſerting the promiſe of grace to be *univerſal*, and explaining the grounds of the remiſſion of ſins and juſtification, he adds, "Non eſt hic opus diſputationibus de prædeſtinatione aut ſimilibus. Nam *promiſſio eſt univer-*

ſalis; et nihil detrahit operibus, imò exſuſcitat ad fidem, et verè bona opera."* Cap de Fide.

LATIMER's anti-Calviniſtic ſentiments are equally well known. They cannot be more clearly expreſſed than they are in the paſſage taken from his ſermon on the third Sunday after Epiphany; in which he preaches *univerſal* redemption and *conditional* ſalvation, in as plain language as thoſe doctrines can be preached. "The promiſes of CHRIST our Saviour (ſays he) are *general*; he made a general proclamation, ſaying, whoſoever believeth in me hath everlaſting life. He ſaith, come to me, all you that labour and are laden, and I will eaſe you. Mark here, he ſaith, come all ye: wherefore then ſhould any man deſpair, or ſhut himſelf out from the promiſes of CHRIST, which be *general*, and pertain to the *whole world*. He that leaveth his wickedneſs and ſins, and is content to amend his life, and believing in CHRIST ſeeketh ſalvation and everlaſting life by him, no doubt that man or woman, whoſoever they may be, ſhall be ſaved. CHRIST ſhed as much blood for *JUDAS* as he did for *PETER*: PETER believed it, and therefore was ſaved. JUDAS did not believe, and

* In the Saxon confeſſion (1551) the ſame is expreſſed nearly in the ſame words. Vide Corpus Confeſſ. page 84.

therefore he was condemned; the fault being in him only, and in nobody elſe." And pointing out the ill uſe which the Goſpellers in his time made of predeſtination, he concludes; "it was needful to beware of ſuch expreſſions of the ſcripture (as were applied to the eſtabliſhment of that doctrine) as of the devil himſelf." We learn by this ſentence (ſays this good Biſhop in the ſame ſermon) "*that many are called*;" that the preaching of the Goſpel is *univerſal*; that it appertaineth to all mankind, as it is written, through the whole earth their ſound is heard. Now ſeeing the Goſpel is *univerſal*, it appeareth that he would have all mankind to be ſaved, and that the fault is not in him, if we be damned; for it is written thus, GOD *would have all to be ſaved.* 1 TIM. xi. 4. His ſalvation is ſufficient to ſave all mankind, but we are ſo wicked of ourſelves, that we refuſe the ſame, and we will not take it when it is offered to us; and therefore he ſaith, few are choſen; that is, few have pleaſure or delight in it.

The ſentiments of RIDLEY and HOOPER upon theſe ſubjects are equally notorious, if we may be permitted to judge of them by their writings. The late principal of St.-Mary-Hall has furniſhed ſtriking extracts from them both. I ſhall quote part of his

extract from the latter, because, if any passage can decidedly contradict the sense in which you understand the doctrine of our church on this subject, this does.

In the preface to his declaration of the Ten Commandments, Bishop HOOPER writes thus: "As far extendeth the virtue and strength of GOD's promise to save men, as the rigour and justice of the law for sin to damn men; for as by the sin and offence of one man, death was extended, and made common unto all men unto condemnation, as PAUL saith, Rom. v., so by the justice of one is derived life *unto all men* unto justification. If *all* then *shall be saved*; what is to be said of those that ST. PETER speaketh of, that shall perish for their false doctrine? and likewise CHRIST saith, that the gate is strait that leadeth to life, and few enter. MATT. vii. Thus the scripture answereth; that the promise of grace appertaineth *unto every sort of men* in the world, and comprehendeth them all; howbeit, within certain limits and bounds; the which if men neglect or pass over, *they exclude themselves* from the promise in CHRIST: as CAIN was no more excluded, till he excluded himself, than ABEL; SAUL than DAVID; JUDAS than PETER; ESAU than JACOB."

I ſhall trouble you only with an additional extract from this preface, which ſpeaks ſo plainly the language of MELANCTHON, in his *Loci Theologici*, as to furniſh the moſt undeniable proof, that HOOPER was no diſciple of CALVIN, whoſe rigid doctrine MELANCTHON ſtrenuouſly and uniformly oppoſed. "JOHN ſaith, no man cometh to me, except my Father draw him. Many men underſtand theſe words in a wrong ſenſe; as though GOD required in a reaſonable man no more than in a dead poſt, and marketh not the words that follow; every man that heareth, and learneth of my Father, cometh to me. GOD draweth with his word and the Holy Ghoſt; but man's duty is to heare and learne; that is to ſay, to receive the grace of GOD, conſent to the promiſe, and not repugne the GOD that calleth. GOD doth promiſe the Holy Ghoſt unto them that aſke him, and not to them that contemne him."

Now what ſhall we ſay about our reformers? If they deſigned that the famous article, on which all Calviniſts build ſo much, ſhould be underſtood in the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe, they muſt be condemned out of their own mouths as the moſt inconſiſtent; of men and as ſuch, very unqualified for the important office they

undertook, that of reforming and new modelling our national church.

The confidential communication that paſſed between CRANMER and MELANCTHON, (who profeſſed the higheſt veneration for each other) previous to the compoſition of the Engliſh articles, has been already remarked. But it is, moreover, known, upon the authority of HEYLIN, that CALVIN made an offer of his aſſiſtance to CRANMER in the proſecution of the reformation in this country, but that the offer was declined. "The Archbiſhop (ſays the hiſtorian) knew the man, and therefore refuſed his offer." Preſuming, Sir, you can be at no loſs to draw the concluſion, I paſs on.

It has been above obſerved, that ſoon after EDWARD's eſtabliſhment on the throne, a paraphraſe of the New Teſtament was ordered, by authority, to be ſet up in all churches for general information. Now at this time LUTHER had publiſhed a commentary of Galatians, and CALVIN his Inſtitutes. But it was the paraphraſe of *ERASMUS* which our reformers thought moſt proper to promote the object in view on this occaſion; the paraphraſe of a man who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in oppoſition to the errors both of LUTHER and CALVIN, on the ſubject of the

enſlaved *will* and *abſolute* decrees. The argument to be drawn from this circumſtance in favour of our reformers not being what all Calviniſts are deſirous of repreſenting them, is, it is preſumed, ſuch as no Calviniſt will ever fairly anſwer. For if our reformers meant that the doctrine of our church ſhould be received in the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe, and at the ſame time made uſe of a paraphraſe calculated to convey a different ſenſe to her members, they were in fact pulling down with one hand what they profeſſed to be building up with the other.

Having thus briefly proved that our reformers, if we give them credit for ſound ſenſe and conſiſtency of character, did not mean, in the ſyſtem of divinity which they laid down in our articles and liturgy, to contradict themſelves; and that conſequently the ſenſe which Calviniſts have annexed to our church articles, is not the ſenſe in which they were originally compoſed; I proceed to my ſecond poſition, which is in fact but a corollary to my firſt, namely, that our church, in the ſubſcription to her articles, does not require a profeſſion of faith from her clergy *different* from that which they are taught to preach to their congregations in the uſe of the eſtabliſhed liturgy.

Every regularly eſtabliſhed church muſt, to be conſiſtent, maintain an uniformity in doctrine. It has been before proved, that the compoſers of our articles and liturgy were *not Calviniſts*; ergo, the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of the articles is not the *true* ſenſe.

The only objection to the foregoing ſyllogiſm, if you make any, will be to the ſecond branch of it, reſpecting the liturgy of the church. But the general meaning of our church ſervice muſt be ſo obvious to every unprejudiced mind, and has been ſo particularly drawn out by Mr. FLETCHER and Dean TUCKER, in oppoſition to the Calviniſtic notions, that it would be throwing away time and paper to detain you on that ſubject.

The Seventh Article, in *your* ſenſe of it, teaches the doctrine of *partial* redemption and *abſolute unconditional* election to eternal life. The liturgy of the church teaches, in every part of it, *univerſal* redemption and conditional ſalvation. But the articles and liturgy of the ſame church cannot be in contradiction to each other.

We will now try the article itſelf, upon which you build your favourite doctrine, by the ſame rule of judgment by which we have already tried the compoſers of it, by applying to it this ſelf-evident pro-

poſition, that as a compoſition deſigned for the uſe of the Chriſtian miniſtry, it muſt convey one determined ſenſe, and cannot contradict itſelf.

Now the main ſubſtance of this article, according to your idea, teaches the abſolute and unconditional election and conſequent ſalvation of particular perſons. But the concluding part of the article, in the moſt plain and decided terms, teaches the very oppoſite doctrine, by telling us that God's promiſes are to be received, as they be generally ſet forth in Holy Scripture. Upon turning to the ſacred ſcripture, we find theſe promiſes are *general* and *conditional*. The ſacred ſcripture informs us, that redemption by CHRIST is as general as the fall was by ADAM, and conſequently *univerſal*. Again it informs us, that the redemption by CHRIST was not more univerſal in its plan than it was GOD's wiſh that it ſhould be in its effects. Two plain texts will be ſufficient to eſtabliſh the foregoing poſitions. "As by the offence of one, judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even ſo (in like manner) by the righteouſneſs of one, the free gift came upon all men unto juſtification of life." Rom. v. 18. "GOD will have *all* men to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowlege of the truth; for the one Mediator, the man CHRIST JESUS, gave himſelf a

ranſom for all." 1 TIM. ii. 4. Now unleſs you can prove that promiſes to particular perſons *excluſively*, and promiſes to mankind *generally*, mean the ſame thing; and that abſolute and unconditional ſalvation, and ſalvation independent upon the performance of certain conditions, convey to the mind the ſame idea; I ſee but one alternative in this caſe, either the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of the article muſt be given up, or the article itſelf muſt plead guilty to the charge of inconſiſtency. This conſideration makes it more than probable, that at the time of framing this article, though the Calviniſtic doctrine might have gained ſome partial footing in England, yet the Engliſh church, ſo juſtly eſteemed the bulwark of the reformation, had not been thoroughly infected with it; and if at all inclined to the Calviniſtic view, had choſen to preſent to her children only "the ſweet and comfortable" ſide of it, as more reconcilable to the general tenour of ſcripture, and more conſonant to the humane feelings of the Chriſtian heart, which, in imitation of the Divine pattern, can "have no pleaſure in the death and deſtruction of a ſinner."

Again; the ſcripture informs us, that the promiſes of GOD are *conditional*. Inſtead of an hundred plain texts that might be produced for the eſtabliſhment of

this point, I ſhall only produce one, which furniſhes us with the general plan of GOD's judgment—"Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. ii. 6.

In the examination of the doctrine of election and predeſtination, I have hitherto proceeded upon the objections which are to be made to the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe, grounded upon the known principles of our reformers, and the conſiſtency of our church. It may now be expected I ſhould ſay ſomething about the ſenſe in which I conceive the doctrine contained in the ſeventeenth article ought to be received; and this ſhall be done as briefly as poſſible.

It was the opinion of the learned Biſhop BULL, who entered fully into the preſent ſubject, that "for the four firſt ages, no true member of the Catholic church ever dreamed of that predeſtination which ſome now make the very baſis and foundation of Chriſtianity. Thoſe pious Chriſtians, illuſtrious both in their life and death, lived and died in the firm perſuaſion of theſe truths—that CHRIST was the common Saviour of mankind; that no one to whom the Goſpel of CHRIST was made known, could attain eternal happineſs without obeying his commands; that no one could obey theſe commands without the

grace and ſpirit of CHRIST; that the grace of GOD would not work out our ſalvation without the concurrence of our own induſtry; that this grace was wanting to no man; that he, who by the grace of GOD was in a ſtate of ſalvation, might by his own fault fall from that ſtate, and periſh eternally; and therefore, he who ſtandeth, ſhould take heed leſt he fall."

Seeing the ſubject in the ſame light, I conceive that I ſubſcribe to the Seventeenth Article in the ſenſe in which it was compoſed, and conſequently in that ſenſe in which it is deſigned by our church that it ſhould be ſubſcribed, when I maintain that the doctrine of predeſtination contained in it is not to be underſtood in that *particular* and *excluſive* ſenſe which has been annexed to it by ſome Chriſtians; but in its general application to that plan of ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST concerted in the Divine mind before the foundation of the world; according to which it is the ſettled purpoſe of GOD, that every man ſhall be ſaved, who ſhall, through the aſſiſtance of Divine grace, be found in conformity with that plan.* For

* In correſpondence with which idea, I find the prologue upon the Epiſtle of ST. PAUL to the Epheſians in an old edition of the Bible, bearing date 1549, (which proves what was at that time the general ſenſe on this ſubject) running thus: "In this Epiſtle, and namely, in the III firſt chapters, ST. PAULE ſheweth that the Goſpell

the particulars of which plan, ſo far as they reſpect man's conduct in the buſineſs, recourſe is to be had to the will of GOD, as revealed in the ſcripture. Every other interpretation which has been annexed to this article by different men, conveys a ſenſe which it does not contain, and which the article was not framed to maintain, but to avoid. "It ſeems clear to me," (ſays a modern profeſſor,* who appears to have examined this article with great critical acumen) "that our church did not, at the time of the ſeparation from the church of Rome, properly intend to lay down any doctrine of predeſtination, but only to declare againſt abuſes actually prevailing." HEY, vol. iii. p. 502.

According to this idea, our reformers in the Seventeenth Article, with the view of counteracting the falſe opinions which prevailed upon the ſubject, deſigned only to give a ſcriptural delineation of Chriſt-

and grace thereof was *forſene* and *predeſtinate* of GOD from before the begynnynge; deſerved thorowe CHRISTE, and now at the laſte ſent forth, that *all men* ſhould beleve thereon, thereby to be juſtifyed, made ryghteouſe, and happy, and to be delyvered from under the dampnacyon of the lawe and captivitie of ceremonyes." To which the following ſummary of the contents of the firſt chapter ſtrictly correſponds:—"The everlaſtyng ordinance and election of GOD, in favynge *all men* thorow CHRISTE JESU his Sonne. We are ordayned to good works. The dominyon of CHRISTE."

* DR. HEY.

ſanity, conſidered as the everlaſting purpoſe of the DEITY; that by becoming an intereſting object of contemplation and comfort to fallen man, it might, thus rightly contemplated, from the aſſured knowledge that his labours would not be in vain in the LORD, tend to the more effectual promotion of Chriſtian piety and Chriſtian endeavours. From whence it follows, that our church can ſcarcely be ſaid to lay down any doctrine in this article, but only gives a ſeries of texts relative to a certain myſterious ſubject, chiefly for the purpoſe of guarding againſt the abuſe of them. No man who ſees the Seventeenth Article in this light will ever find himſelf perplexed with it; but ſhould any man chooſe, from pious references to the Divine plan in the ſalvation of fallen man, to form a theory of his own, inconſiſtent with the plain revealed word of GOD in ſcripture, he will never be able perfectly to ſatisfy himſelf, much leſs to give a reaſon to others for the faith that is in him. What is to be met with in the concluſion of the Profeſſor's Treatiſe on this article, appears to me ſo excellently calculated to convey a ſuitable idea to the Chriſtian on this ſubject, that I truſt you will thank me for introducing it to your attention. "That I am a member of the church of CHRIST is matter

of ſincere rejoicing to me; what a privilege! to be invited into ſuch a ſociety; to be put into a way which leadeth to eternal life! The importance of the bleſſing ſtill grows upon me, when I conſider that the church of CHRIST has been an object of attention in the Divine mind ever ſince the fall of our firſt parents. Chriſtianity exiſting in the Divine mind before the foundation of the world, and opening gradually upon mankind, is the moſt auguſt and affecting object which a human being can contemplate. And when an examination of my heart and actions gives me any reaſon to think that I am really a member of it, my hope is confirmed, and my devout affections enlivened by the conſtancy of Divine benevolence. Nevertheleſs it is intelligible how an opinion that all things are fixed by the DEITY may lead a man into a ſtate of deſpondency, or into a negligent and diſſolute courſe of life. Though, therefore, I am happy in having ſuch a ſubject of meditation to raiſe my mind to piety and devotion, yet I ſhall endeavour to ſtrengthen and improve my practical principles by attending to the promiſes of GOD, and to the revealed deſcription of that conduct which he wiſhes man to purſue for the improvement of human happineſs." HEY, vol. iv. p. 50.

But I ſhall not do juſtice to the Seventeenth Article, if I do not obſerve further, that ſo far from being intended to favour the *Calviniſtic* doctrine, it appears to furniſh the moſt deciſive internal evidence againſt it. By the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of predeſtination we underſtand, according to CALVIN's definition of it, the abſolute unconditional election of certain perſons to eternal life, and the as abſolute reprobation of all others, who are not included in that choſen number. "Multi quidem acſi invidiam a DEO repellere vellent, electionem ita fatentur, ut negent quenquam reprobari, ſed inſcitè nimis et pueriliter; quando ipſa electio niſi reprobationi oppoſita non ſtaret. Dicitur ſegregare DEUS quos adoptet in ſalutem, fortuitò alios adipiſci, vel ſuâ induſtriâ acquirere, quod ſola electio paucis confert pluſquam inſulſe dicetur. Quos ergo DEUS *præterit reprobat*, neque aliâ de causâ, niſi quod ab hæreditate quam filiis ſuis prædeſtinat, illos vult excludere." CALV. Inſtit. lib. iii. cap. 23, ſect. 1.

If this doctrine be *a fundamental doctrine* of Chriſtianity, the whole of it muſt be taken together. We are not at liberty to divide an article of belief, both parts of which, if they ſtand at all, ſtand upon the ſame foundation in ſcripture; and ſubſcribe to one part, whilſt we drop the other. You, and many

Calviniſts, by keeping part of this doctrine out of ſight, would wiſh ſo to do. But upon the ſuppoſition that it is a revealed doctrine, I take upon me to affirm, on the authority of ST. JAMES, ii. 10, that you are no more juſtified in rejecting one half of it, than I ſhould be in rejecting the whole. In fact, the doctrine of election and reprobation in the Calviniſtic ſenſe are *correlatives*, and muſt ſtand or fall together.

You flatter yourſelf, in p. 90, that under the tuition of ST. AUGUSTINE you have found out a way to reconcile the point, by exchanging the obnoxious word *reprobation* for the ſofter term *preterition*. But, Sir, you will remember what your other tutor CALVIN, another great defender of abſolute decrees, has told you above, "Quos ergo DEUS *præterit reprobat.*" *Preterition* and *reprobation*, in the Calviniſtic language then, are but two words for the ſame thing; and I have but to turn to page 97 of your book, to prove that they are ſo in your ſenſe of them. For to my poſition, that there are no abſolute decrees determining the ſalvation of individuals to be found in ſcripture, you oppoſe the homily which ſays, "Scripture doth acknowledge but two places after this life; the one proper for the *elect* and bleſſed of GOD, the other to the *reprobate*."

From hence it appears, that there are but two ſorts of people provided for in the next world; in our SAVIOUR's language, "thoſe that have done good, and thoſe that have done evil," JOHN v. 29; the *elect* and the *reprobate*. Now if (as you ſay) the election of ſome ſuppoſes the preterition, and non-election of others; and if theſe non-elect, in order to keep the frightful part of your doctrine out of ſight, are to be conſidered not as conſigned to puniſhment, but only as paſſed over by GOD; it is incumbent upon modern Calviniſts to tell us, what is to become of theſe *non-elect* in the next world; ſince the ſcripture has certainly made no proviſion for them.

The concluſion I draw from the above premiſes, applicable to the Seventeenth Article, is this; that as reprobation is inſeparably connected with the doctrine of predeſtination in the Calviniſtic ſenſe, and conſequently would not have been omitted in an Article deſigned to convey *that ſenſe*; and as it has no neceſſary connection with predeſtination, conſidered as the everlaſting purpoſe of GOD, relative to the covenant of grace in JESUS CHRIST; the circumſtance of its being *totally omitted* in the Seventeenth Article, coupled with the conſideration of a clauſe being inſerted for the expreſs purpoſe of guarding

againſt ſuch an idea, proves to my mind, that the Article was unqueſtionably meant to be taken in the *latter* ſenſe.

In fact, the unſcriptural idea that has been annexed by Calviniſts to predeſtination, appears to have ariſen chiefly, from their taking that word in a too ſtrict and literal ſenſe. The holy ſcriptures, in condeſcenſion to the finite capacities of man, often ſpeak to him after the manner of men, otherwiſe he could not underſtand them. We have no words that can convey an adequate idea of the infinite nature of GOD. We cannot conceive a duration, without *paſt*, *preſent* and *to come*. But theſe cannot be in GOD, for with GOD all things are preſent. The word predeſtination muſt therefore be conſidered as ſuited to the finite capacities of man, not to the infinite nature of GOD. A want of attention to this circumſtance has laid the foundation for the endleſs diſputes which have taken place upon this ſubject. For, by ſuppoſing a time paſt in GOD, and the decree already paſt concerning things to come, ſuch a decree takes away free-will; elſe the will of men might diſappoint the decree of GOD. On the other hand, without a degree of free-will, ſo far as to enable him to refuſe the evil and chooſe the good, all the pro-

miſes and threatenings in ſcripture, the proteſtations of GOD that He delighteth not in the death of a ſinner, and his earneſt and continued invitations to repentance, are left deſtitute of all meaning and application.

But let us underſtand predeſtination as a word accommodated to our capacities, but not to be ſtrictly and philoſophically inquired into; and, inſtead of drawing conſequences from it which do not neceſſarily belong to it, let us conſider it as deſigned to convey an idea of the firmneſs of GOD's covenant in CHRIST; a covenant as impoſſible to be fruſtrated, as if, according to our ideas, it had been decreed in time paſt, even from eternity; and all difficulty on this ſubject will vaniſh.

With this idea before him, every Chriſtian will be encouraged to ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; upon the aſſurance, that the gate will not be ſhut againſt any one, who, according to the tenor of the Goſpel covenant, ſhall be found in a fit condition to enter in.

If I have treſpaſſed upon your time by what has been here ſaid upon the ſubject of the ſeventeenth Article, I ſhall, I truſt, meet with indulgence, when it is conſidered, that I am contending for no leſs than

the profeſſional character both of myſelf, and my brethren of the eſtabliſhed church; who, at the ſame time that we cannot ſee this Article through a *Calviniſtic* medium, do not think ourſelves obnoxious to the charge brought againſt us, of ſubſcribing to Articles that we do not believe. I contend, Sir, (and I have ſufficiently conſidered the ſubject, to feel myſelf indiſpoſed to give up readily one inch of the ground upon which I here advance) that Calviniſm is *not* the genuine doctrine of the church of England, but an unſcriptural doctrine, that has been grafted upon it by injudicious though well-meaning divines; that both our articles and liturgy, in conformity with the whole tenour of ſcripture, are decidedly againſt it.

I am not to be informed that the contrary has been attempted to be proved by the late Mr. TOPLADY; who, wherever he met with the words *our*, *elect*, *choſen*, *predeſtination*, *will*, *purpoſe*, &c. was in the habit of affixing that particular ſenſe to them that ſuited his eſtabliſhed prejudice. But ſuch a mode of proof will not ſatisfy thoſe, who, in order to prevent their miſtaking names for things, are accuſtomed to examine words by the relative ſenſe which they bear to the parts of ſcripture where they are found.

From theſe premiſes I feel myſelf authoriſed to conclude, that whatever hereſy there may be in this caſe, it certainly is not on the ſide of the eſtabliſhed clergy, who do not conſider themſelves miniſters of CALVIN and LUTHER, but of JESUS CHRIST.

We know that at the beginning of the Reformation the grand ſubject of general oppoſition was the erroneous doctrine of the church of Rome; part of which related to *good works*. The foreign reformers, ZWINGLE, CALVIN, and LUTHER, were men of more zeal than judgment. The very expreſſion *good works* conveyed ſo unchriſtian a ſound to their ears, that, in guarding againſt it, they thought the doctrine of *Divine agency* could not poſſibly be carried too far. Hence, in their pious zeal for the honour of GOD, which they conſidered as having been trampled upon by human pretenſions, they eſtabliſhed what Dr. BALGUY truly, though perhaps coarſely, calls a "ſyſtem of nonſenſe;" by endeavouring, in contradiction to the moſt decided language of ſcripture, to reconcile the abſolute decrees of the DEITY with the accountableneſs of a rational being.

Our reformers were wiſer men; profiting by the example of the foreign reformers, they ſteered clear of their extravagance, and whilſt they effectually

guarded againſt the Popiſh error of good works, they at the ſame time preſerved the conſiſtency of the word of GOD. Happy had it been for this country, if the divines of our church had acted uniformly upon the ſame principles; we ſhould then have been freed, it may be preſumed, from contention upon this unprofitable ſubject.

But unfortunately the Marian perſecution threw many of our moſt exemplary divines into the very hot-bed of Calviniſm; from whence in due time they returned to their own country, luxuriant, if I may ſo ſay, in the growth of thoſe opinions, with reſpect both to the diſcipline and doctrine of the Chriſtian church, which, when arrived at maturity, effected the deſtruction of our national conſtitution.

If juſtice, therefore, be done in this caſe, the clergy who brought the diſgrace upon our ſound and ſcriptural church doctrine, by the unſound and unſcriptural comments, gloſſes, and notions, which, as Biſhop HALL ſomewhere ſays, "they fiſhed out of the lake of Geneva," ſhould bear their own burden; whilſt our reformers are ſuffered to go free. For, excluſive of the proof which has been already brought upon this ſubject, we are told by STRYPE, to whoſe authority you appeal, that, till about the year

1595, CALVIN's way of explaining the Divine decrees was not entertained by many learned men of the Univerſity of Cambridge; but theſe opinions were introduced by ſome of our divines, who, during the perſecution of Queen MARY, had fled to Geneva and Zurich; and that, although Calviniſm prevailed much in the reign of Queen ELIZABETH, yet it was not underſtood to be certainly *the ſenſe of our Articles*, even by thoſe who held this doctrine.

A very great man, at a moſt unfortunate period of our hiſtory, made a deſperate attempt to ſtem the torrent of this overbearing and dangerous doctrine. But the preſbytery, which, with the ſolemn league and covenant from Scotland, was then buſily employed in cramming *Calviniſm* down the throats of the good people of England, bore ſo hard upon him, that in ſpite of the ſupport he received from primitive antiquity, *the ancient diſcipline of the church*, and the moſt unanſwerable arguments, he was cruſhed beneath its incumbent weight.

The clergy of the church, however, have derived an advantage from his exertions, which it will be their own faults if they ever loſe. They have learnt from him not to ſtop ſhort at the German ſyſtems of divinity, or to perplex themſelves with the novel

diſputes of the remonſtrants or anti-remonſtrants, &c. &c. but to put themſelves under the tuition of the primitive church, by reading downwards from the firſt beginning of Chriſtianity to the preſent time; thus deriving their faith from *a pure fountain*, inſtead of drawing from ſtreams which have been troubled, in conſequence of the impure channels through which they have paſſed. And the more this plan of reading is purſued, the more ſatisfied ſhall we be, that the doctrine of the church of England, as it has been here repreſented, is conformable to the primitive pattern, and that by the rejection of Calviniſm our clergy returned to the original ſtandard of faith, and ought not to be made anſwerable for the miſapprehenſions of their predeceſſors, who choſe to underſtand the words of CRANMER and RIDLEY in a ſenſe different from what CRANMER and RIDLEY ever intended.

The concluſion from the foregoing conſiderations ſhall be drawn from your own premiſes laid down in p. 83. "What was truth at the Reformation, that truth *now* is; it cannot change with the fluctuating minds of men, but, like its Divine Author, is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever." Ergo, inſtead of excommunicating me for my ſuppoſed de-

parture from the eſtabliſhed doctrine, you muſt come over to me, if you would poſſeſs the character of being a conſiſtent member of the church of England.

In what has been already ſuggeſted on this ſubject, I am willing to flatter myſelf an anſwer may be found to every part of your third letter before me. But that I may pay all poſſible attention to every thing that you have thought proper to ſubmit to my conſideration, I will yet add a few further remarks on the ſeveral prominent parts of it, as I paſs on.

In page 63, you deſcribe the ſtate of grace and acceptance with GOD, in which fallen man is placed by the redemption of CHRIST, as a ſtate big with deſpondency; becauſe I repreſent it as a ſtate of *poſſible*, but not *certain* ſalvation. "A notion this (you ſay) which tends to make the ſtupendous ſcheme of redemption dependent on the fickle will of the creature, &c." A notion, which totally contradicts the whole plan of the Goſpel, and overturns every idea of grace, by making the favour of GOD to wait on the actions of men, that it may be diſpenſed towards them, according as they ſhall behave themſelves towards Him. A notion, by which a man may be one day an heir of GOD and a joint heir with

CHRIST, and the next day a child of wrath, and an heir of hell."

The notion here deſcribed as *big with deſpondency*, appears to be the only notion which the Bible furniſhes on this ſubject. The notion of *abſolute unconditional* ſalvation, independent of human conduct exiſts no where but in the heads of Calviniſts. GOD deals with man as a rational creature, and He will judge him as ſuch. He ſets life and death before him, and furniſhes him with the means of grace to enable him to make a proper choice. Should he act wiſely, he will receive the reward of his promiſed inheritance, through the merits of a crucified SAVIOUR: ſhould the gifts of Divine grace, by which he may be enabled to work out his ſalvation, be thrown away upon him, he will ſtand condemned for the neglect; to ſuch a man, there remains only a fearful looking-for of judgment. Such is the Goſpel plan of ſalvation: I am much miſtaken, if in the Bible any other is to be found. The favour of GOD is there deſcribed, as waiting on the actions of men; and from the plain letter of ſcripture it is to be proved, that man may be one day an heir of GOD, and the next day a child of wrath, according to his uſe or abuſe of Divine grace.

Now, Sir, either your notion on this ſubject is right, or mine; for no room is left for any other. The ſtandard by which this point muſt be determined is the ſcripture. To this ſtandard you make no appeal; for I do not find a ſingle text brought in ſupport of your poſition of abſolute unconditional ſalvation. On my ſide an appeal to ſcripture ſcarce need be made; for every one but a rigid Calviniſt is convinced, that the doctrine maintained by me is to be found either in direct or indirect terms in almoſt every part of it. One or two plain paſſages it will be ſufficient to point out to conſideration, as deciſive on this ſubject. In the 18th chapter of EZEKIEL, GOD ſpeaks by the mouth of his prophet in the following unequivocal ſtyle, 18, 26, &c. "When a righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them: for his iniquity that he hath done ſhall he die." Again, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive. Becauſe he conſidereth, and turneth away from all his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die."

Admitting that there is any ſenſe in the foregoing language, it follows, that your doctrine of juſtification, by which we underſtand that a man *once juſtified* is *always juſtified*, and cannot fall away from grace, cannot be true doctrine; on the contrary, it is as evident from the foregoing paſſage, that a righteous man may turn away from his righteouſneſs and die in ſin, and a wicked man turn away from his wickedneſs, and thereby ſave his ſoul alive, as the cleareſt demonſtration of the cleareſt propoſition in EUCLID; and conſequently that a man may be, according to his uſe and abuſe of Divine grace, one day an heir of GOD, and the next day a child of wrath, and an heir of hell. *Q. e. d.*

Again, ST. PAUL deſcribes the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of GOD in the following plain manner: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds," &c. Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. "For there is no reſpect of perſons with GOD." From the foregoing paſſage the concluſion appears to be incontrovertible; that the favour of GOD does in ſome ſenſe wait upon the actions of men, ſince thoſe only who patiently continue in well-doing will finally be partakers of it. "He that endureth to the end (ſays our SAVIOUR) ſhall be

ſaved." From whence it is to be inferred, that ſome would not patiently continue to the end in the Chriſtian courſe, and would in conſequence fall ſhort of the prize of their high calling; agreeable to the idea which ST. PAUL impreſſed upon the minds of his Corinthian diſciples, when he ſaid, "Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall." And elſewhere, when ſpeaking of thoſe who had been "enlightened, and had taſted of the heavenly gift, and had been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, (he ſays) if theſe ſhall fall away, it is impoſſible to renew them again unto repentance."

Paſſages need not be multiplied to prove what is the general doctrine of ſcripture, and upon which the propriety of the preacher's office is founded, that man in this world is not in a ſtate of *certain* ſalvation, but in a ſtate of *probation* for it, conſequently in that ſtate he may fall away from grace, and may, by due repentance, be recovered to it again. So far, indeed, as reſpects the infallibility of the Divine promiſes, every Chriſtian may be ſaid to be in a certain ſtate of ſalvation, becauſe "He is faithful who hath promiſed." But ſo far as reſpects the conduct of man in that character, his ſtate of ſalvation is but *conditional*. For the gift of the Holy Spirit, to which

every Chriſtian becomes entitled by baptiſm, though a pledge of his promiſed inheritance, is not an immediate teſtimony of the *certainty* of a future event, but of an event which may (without failure on our part) be reduced to act as certainly as it is promiſed, or as the earneſt is given in hand. And this is what is to be underſtood, when the Apoſtle talks of "taſting of the heavenly gift, and partaking of the Holy Ghoſt, and taſting of the good word of GOD, and the power of the world to come," namely, that Chriſtians may, by quenching the ſpirit, ſo fall away from the tenour of the Goſpel covenant, as to loſe all the benefits annexed to their Chriſtian engagement.

Such is the doctrine of ſcripture, and upon that ground I reſt the cauſe. It will only be deſcending in our mode of proof to bring forward the teſtimony of the homilies, articles, liturgy, and the language of our reformers, to the eſtabliſhment of the ſame point. I will not, therefore, detain you upon this ſubject longer than whilſt I point out to you the declaration of our Sixteenth Article, which ſays, that "after we have received the Holy Ghoſt we may depart from grace given, and fall into ſin, and by the grace of GOD we may riſe again and amend our lives; and therefore they are to be condemned which ſay they

can no more ſin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveneſs to ſuch as truly repent." I muſt leave you to compare, at your leiſure, your doctrine of certain ſalvation and complete juſtification, connected as it is with the impoſſibility of a man's falling away from a ſtate of grace, with the tenour of the foregoing article. After bringing to your recollection that angels fell from a ſtate of grace and glory in heaven; that our firſt parents fell from a ſtate of perfection in Paradiſe; that one, who was in the number of our SAVIOUR's choſen twelve, to whom he ſaid, that "they ſhould ſit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael," ſold himſelf to the devil; and one of the deacons, who had been full of the Holy Ghoſt, is ſaid to have turned apoſtate: I will add but a word more upon this ſubject, and that for the ſake of introducing the words of the venerable LATIMER, becauſe they are in as direct contradiction to your poſition, as words can be. In his ſermon on the third Sunday after Epiphany, the venerable reformer writes thus: "We need not (ſays he) go about to trouble ourſelves with curious queſtions of the predeſtination of GOD, but let us rather endeavour ourſelves that we may be in CHRIST; for when we be in him then we are well, and then we may be ſure that we are

ordained to eternal life. But you will ſay, how ſhall I know that I am in the book of life? How ſhall I prove myſelf to be elected of GOD to everlaſting life? I anſwer, firſt, we may know that we be one time in the book, and another time come out again, as appeareth by DAVID, which was written in the book of life; but when he ſinned, he at the ſame time was out of the book of the favour of GOD, until he had repented, and was ſorry for his fault. So we may be in the book one time, and afterwards, when we forget GOD, and his word, and do wickedly, we come out of the book, that is, out of CHRIST. And in that book are written all true believers," &c. According, therefore, to the doctrine of the ſcripture and our church, a man may be one day an heir of GOD and a joint heir of CHRIST, and the next day a child of wrath and an heir of hell. The concluſion reſts with yourſelf.

You ſay in the ſame 64th page, that "my *novel* opinion of a conditional ſalvation, independent of the Divine decrees, is as contrary to ſound ſenſe and the common received principles of reaſon and philoſophy, as it is to ſcripture and experience; and if puſhed home, muſt end in little ſhort of atheiſm, as well by moving the government from CHRIST's ſhoulders,

and by placing it on our own, as by robbing GOD of ſome of his eſſential attributes, and indirectly at leaſt denying his providence."

It is with concern I find myſelf obliged to oppoſe to the whole of the foregoing ſtatement a decided negative. But as aſſertions without proof are of no weight in the ſcale of reaſon, I proceed to analize the foregoing vehement, not to ſay raſh and groundleſs, deductions; and this ſhall be done as briefly as poſſible.

What you are pleaſed to call my *novel* opinion, is to be traced back to the days of ADAM before the fall, who was placed in a ſtate of *conditional* happineſs in Paradiſe. The Divine gift of immortality was originally ſuſpended on the condition of his abſtaining from the forbidden tree. The conditional ſalvation of man ſubſequent to the fall is certainly the language of the Bible from Geneſis to Revelations; it was unqueſtionably the doctrine of the primitive church; it was alſo the doctrine of our reformers. Speaking, however, of Biſhops HALL, REYNOLDS, JEWELL, and HOOKER, you venture to affirm, that not only in none of their works, but in thoſe of no proteſtant divine of any note for more than a century after the reformation, any thing like my plan of *conditional* ſalvation is to be found, or as you expreſs it, "condi-

tional works previous to juſtification." Confident aſſertion ought to be accompanied with competent information. It is to be concluded, therefore, that it muſt have eſcaped your recollection, that both the authority of HALL, DAVENANT, and HOOKER, are on record againſt your poſition. It may ſuffice to produce that of the latter, becauſe it is deciſive.

"Predeſtination (ſays he, in his ſermons againſt TRAVERS at the Temple) was not the *abſolute* will of GOD, but *conditional;* that the doings of the wicked were not of the will of GOD poſitive, but permiſſive; that the reprobate are not rejected, but for the evil works which GOD did foreſee they will commit," &c. Letter ii. p. 36, 37. And when TRAVERS called for his authority for thus expounding the Apoſtle againſt the judgment of all churches and all good writers, HOOKER replied, "that the ſentences which he might have cited out of all church confeſſions, together with the beſt learned monuments of former times, and not the meaneſt of our own, were more in number than perhaps he willingly would have heard of." Anſwer to TRAVERS' Supplication, ſect. 22, &c.

But I muſt confeſs myſelf unable to underſtand what objection there can be to ſalvation upon *condi-*

tions. For the conditions in queſtion, it is to be obſerved, are conditions of GOD's making; as ſuch they appear not in the light in which you ſeem to conſider them, as an encroachment on Divine grace on the part of man, ſo much as an extenſion of that grace on the part of GOD. It will be allowed, that the giver of a free gift has a right to annex his own conditions to the obligation. Now if the conditions annexed are calculated to render the receiver, what he otherwiſe would not be, fit to be a partaker of the gift, they muſt be conſidered as an additional manifeſtation of that loving-kindneſs from which the gift in queſtion proceeded; becauſe they are a merciful proviſion on the part of the benefactor, for the ſecurity of the benefit to the parties for whom it was originally deſigned. In this light *conditions* of ſalvation have always appeared to me, conſidering that the ſame all-gracious Being who made thoſe conditions, has engaged (if man be not wanting to himſelf) to enable him to perform them.

To proceed; my *novel* opinion of conditional ſalvation, as you are pleaſed to ſtyle it, if it be eſtabliſhed by the general tenour of ſcripture, as every intelligent reader of ſcripture muſt know, cannot, it is preſumed, be contrary to ſound ſenſe, reaſon, or

philoſophy: and that it is neither calculated to move the government from CHRIST's ſhoulders, or, by denying GOD's providence, to open a door for reaſoning againſt the ſuperintending power and wiſdom of GOD in the moral world, I pledge myſelf to prove.

When we talk of GOD's providence as exerciſed in the government of the inanimate and brutal part of the creation, we are talking of one ſubject: when we talk of GOD's moral government of his rational creatures, we are ſpeaking of another. The argument, therefore, which you have drawn, p. 69, from GOD's particular providence and minute ſuperintendance of all the affairs of the natural, viſible, and material world, does not apply to the ſubject for the ſupport of which you have brought it. An all-wiſe Being will, it is to be expected, ſuit his mode of government to the condition of the ſubjects to be governed. The inanimate and brutal courſe of nature, not being inveſted with any power of ſelf-direction, muſt for its regularity depend upon the *abſolute* and fixed law of a ſuperintending Providence, ordering all things to the fulfilment of the Divine will; but man is a rational creature, poſſeſſed of that power of ſelf-direction which renders him accountable for his actions. With reſpect to him, therefore, the decrees of GOD relative

to his moral government muſt be *conditional*, and they muſt, in ſome ſort, wait upon the conduct of the moral agent. Nor does the conſequence at which you ſeem to be alarmed follow from this poſition. For, if one part of the Divine counſel, reſpecting the government of the world was, that man ſhould, as a rational creature, be poſſeſſed of a ſufficient degree of freedom to render him juſtly accountable for his conduct; a circumſtance which is abundantly to be proved from the propoſals, promiſes, and threatenings in ſcripture, every where addreſſed to his conſideration; it follows, that GOD's wiſdom cannot be diſappointed, nor his ſuperintending power overruled, be man's conduct what it may; becauſe, according to the general plan of the Divine counſel, GOD deſigned to manifeſt his ſovereign power in the wonderful creation, wiſe government, and righteous judgment of *free agents*; and not in ſo overpowering their will, as thereby to ſacrifice all his other attributes, for the ſake of placing one only in a more conſpicuous light.

The doctrine of man's free-will aſſiſted by Divine grace, according to the Goſpel plan, can never be reconciled with the doctrine of an unſcriptural tyrannical ſovereignty, which has been raſhly attributed

to GOD, under the idea of doing Him honour; but is perfectly conſiſtent with the awful and yet amiable views, which the ſcriptures give us of GOD's real ſovereignty; of which the Divine attributes of wiſdom, juſtice, and mercy, are the inſeparable companions.

I muſt leave you, Sir, with your brother *fataliſts* (for the doctrine of decrees, as you deſcribe them from Archbiſhop USHER, page 78, is no other than *fataliſm*) to rejoice, in the words of JORTIN, (ſince you can rejoice) "in a religious ſyſtem, conſiſting of human creatures without liberty, doctrines without ſenſe, faith without reaſon, and a GOD without mercy." You have ſpent many pages upon what appears to me to be not a fit ſubject for human ſpeculation. Whilſt man confines himſelf to the revealed will of GOD, he has it in his power to ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs; when he attempts to ſpeculate beyond it, the danger is, that he will ſpeak the words of raſhneſs and folly, rather than thoſe of wiſdom. For this reaſon I paſs over the ſubject of the Divine decrees, although I think I know juſt as much about them as any Calviniſt whatever.

Archbiſhop KING ſpoke ſenſe upon this myſterious ſubject, when he ſaid, "Fore-knowledge and decrees are only aſſigned to GOD, to give us a notion of the

ſteadineſs and certainty of the Divine actions: and if ſo, for us to conclude, that what is repreſented by them is inconſiſtent with the contingency of events or free-will, &c. is the ſame abſurdity, as to conclude that China is no bigger than a ſheet of paper, becauſe the map that repreſents it is contained in that compaſs. It is true, we call GOD's fore-knowledge and our own by the ſame name; but this is not from any real likeneſs in the nature of the faculties, but from ſome proportion obſervable in the effects of them: both having this advantage, that they prevent any ſurpriſe on the perſon endowed with them. Now as it is true, that no contingency or freedom in the creatures can any way deceive or ſurpriſe GOD, put him to a loſs, or oblige Him to alter his meaſures: ſo, on the other hand, it is likewiſe true that the Divine preſcience does not hinder freedom; and a thing may either be or not be, notwithſtanding that foreſight of it which we aſcribe to GOD. When therefore it is alleged, that if GOD foreſee I ſhall be ſaved, my ſalvation is infallible; this does not follow; becauſe the fore-knowledge of GOD is not like man's, which requires neceſſity in the event in order to its being certain, but of another nature conſiſtent with contingency; and our inability to comprehend this

ariſes from our ignorance of the true nature of what we call fore-knowledge in GOD, &c. Only of this we are ſure, that in this it differs from ours, that it may conſiſt either with the being or not being of what is ſaid to be foreſeen, &c. Thus ST. PAUL was a choſen veſſel, and he reckons himſelf in the number of the predeſtinated; Eph. i. 5. And yet he ſuppoſes it poſſible for him to miſs of ſalvation, and therefore he looked upon himſelf as obliged to uſe mortification, and exerciſe all other graces, in order to make his calling and election ſure; leſt, as he tells us, that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhall be a caſt-away, or a reprobate, as the word is tranſlated in other places."

To Archbiſhop USHER, upon whoſe authority you build, the language of ZOPHAR to JOB might have been addreſſed with propriety: "Canſt thou, by ſearching, find out GOD? Canſt thou find out the ALMIGHTY to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? It is deeper than hell, what canſt thou know?" JOB xi. 7, 8.

It may not, however, be improper to inform you, ſhould you be ignorant of the circumſtance, that the good Archbiſhop, who, in your judgment, ſo ably and ſatisfactorily handled this ſubject, died with very

different ſentiments upon it: a declared renunciation of his *Calviniſtic* tenets being to be found on record. Vide COLLIER, vol. ii. Other authorities, which you have preſſed into your ſervice on this occaſion, would not, I think, if fully inveſtigated, ſtand you in much better account.

The fact is, it rarely happens, that profeſſed Calviniſts write long upon their favourite ſubject, without being inconſiſtent with themſelves. Indeed, without waſting time on this ſubject, I would only obſerve, that ſome inſtances you have brought, with the view of eſtabliſhing your poſition reſpecting the abſolute decrees, do not to me appear favourable to your cauſe. For inſtance, you ſay in page 65, that it is GOD's decree, "that ſeed-time and harveſt ſhall not fail." But you will remember, that it is alſo a decree of GOD, "that in the ſweat of his face man ſhall eat bread;" Gen. iii. 19. You ſay that the power which ordained the end, did alſo ordain the means neceſſary to accompliſh that end. How is this proved in the caſe before us? GOD ordered the general courſe of nature. He ordains that the ſun ſhall regularly ſhine, and the rain deſcend, to the end that the earth may bring forth her increaſe. But where the labour of man fails, experience tells us

there ſhall be no harveſt. Thus GOD's general decree, with reſpect to the courſe of nature, becomes a *conditional* decree to the individual concerned in the event; and man reaps only in proportion as he has ſown.

The inſtance taken from ST. PAUL's voyage, when compared with other parts of ſcripture, does not appear to be one jot more concluſive. It was revealed to ST. PAUL, that the crew of the ſhip in which he was ſhould not be loſt: but ST. PAUL was ſo far from conſidering this decree (if you chooſe to call it ſuch) in an *abſolute* ſenſe, that he thought it neceſſary to guard the crew againſt a circumſtance that would have fruſtrated it: "Except theſe abide in the ſhip, "(ſays he) ye cannot be ſaved." The concurrence of human means therefore was, in St. Paul's opinion, neceſſary to the accompliſhment of the Divine decree. Thus the decree in this inſtance waited upon the actions of men. But you will ſay, as you have ſaid, that the means were ſecured in this caſe together with the end. Taking this for our general rule of judgment on this ſubject, it muſt be expected that there ſhould be a conſiſtency in the Divine proceedings. Yet we find, that after the decree had been paſſed againſt Nineveh, that it ſhould be deſtroyed

in forty days, that GOD repented of his purpoſe, in conſequence of the ſubſequent conduct of the inhabitants. It is for the maintainers of abſolute decrees to reconcile theſe inconſiſtencies. My concluſion from them is, that GOD's moral government will, in all caſes, be found conſiſtent with the free agency of men; and that the perplexity which has been introduced into this ſubject, has been derived from man's preſuming to ſpeak with preciſion on caſes, on which it has not pleaſed GOD to give him competent information.

When I conſider, in reverential ſilence, the Providence of an all-wiſe GOD controlling and directing the affairs of the univerſe, I feel myſelf ſtanding upon the firm ſhore, contemplating the majeſtic object of the boundleſs ocean before me. But when I attempt to trace out the exact line by which that Providence is directed, I am as it were launched off in a perilous bark upon the wide deep, and every moment on the point of being ſwallowed up in the fathomleſs abyſs. It is enough for men to know, that the Judge of all the earth will do right. To make uſe of your own words, (and I cannot make uſe of better) "it is enough for us to acknowledge, that all GOD's dealings with the children of men are holy, juſt, and

good; that there is a day coming, wherein his proceedings, however dark to us at preſent, will be vindicated before angels and men; when all the glorified ſaints ſhall confeſs, that their ſalvation is wholly owing to GOD's free grace and mercy in JESUS CHRIST; and all that periſh, ſhall acknowledge that their deſtruction is entirely of themſelves." Page 79.

Having diſpatched this ſubject, I proceed to pages 88 and 89 of your publication, which muſt not be paſſed over, though it is with reluctance I ſay any thing about them. It muſt, doubtleſs, have eſcaped your recollection, (for I cannot permit myſelf to think that you would aſſert what you muſt otherwiſe know not to be true) that a great part of what is ſaid in the pages under conſideration, has been proved to be in direct contradiction to hiſtoric fact. In pages 102, 103, and 104, of the anſwer to *Pietas Oxonienſis*, you find this ſubject drawn out for your conſideration; where you were informed, that theſe Lambeth Articles were originally drawn up at Cambridge; and ſo far from containing, as you ſay, the avowed ſenſe of the church of England, were drawn up for the ſatisfaction of thoſe Calviniſts at Cambridge, who thought the Thirty-Nine Articles not

ſufficiently explicit for their purpoſe; that theſe Lambeth Articles never received the ſanction of the church of England, but on the contrary were ſo much diſapproved of, as to be recalled as ſoon as publiſhed; and that upon the motion made at the Hampton-Court conference to add the ſubſtance of them to the Thirty-Nine Articles, the propoſal was rejected.

You refer me to the authority of STRYPE and TOPLADY. The former tells us, in his Life of WHITGIFT, page 459, that the Archbiſhop, ſpeaking of theſe Lambeth Articles, expreſſed himſelf thus: "I know them to be ſound doctrine, and uniformly profeſſed in the church of England, and agreeable to the Articles of religion eſtabliſhed by authority." But this proves only that WHITGIFT was himſelf a *Calviniſt;* not that the Lambeth Articles contained the avowed ſenſe of the church of England. Whereas the obſervation of the ſame hiſtorian, where he ſays, page 435, that till about the year 1595, "CALVIN's way of explaining the Divine decrees was not entertained by many learned men in Cambridge; and that Calviniſm was not underſtood to be certainly the ſenſe of our Articles, even by thoſe who held that doctrine," evidently

appears to juſtify a concluſion the very oppoſite to the one you have drawn on this ſubject.

On appeal to TOPLADY, I find him, like a true Calviniſt, after bringing all the Calviniſtic part of the ſtory before his readers, thus taking leave of the Archbiſhop: "Thus (ſays he) have we ſeen of what principles and ſpirit were the Archbiſhops of Canterbury all through the reign of ELIZABETH, the illuſtrious refoundreſs of the church of England." But the partial writer, unwilling to ſay any thing that might tend to efface the Calviniſtic impreſſion, which it was his object to leave upon his reader's mind, avoids making any mention of the reception which the Lambeth Articles met with at Court. He takes care not to relate, what an impartial hiſtorian ought not to have omitted, the circumſtance of this illuſtrious refoundreſs of the church of England threatening the Archbiſhop with a *premunire* for his conduct on this occaſion, and her inſiſting upon the immediate ſuppreſſion of the obnoxious Articles in queſtion; together with the circumſtance of their being actually ſuppreſſed; and that in ſo careful a manner, ſays COLLIER, vol. ii. page 645, "that a copy was not to be met with for ſome time after."

From all the circumſtances, therefore, relative to the Lambeth Articles fairly appreciated, I ſcruple not to affirm, that they are as unfavourable to the cauſe you have brought to ſupport, as any Anti-Calviniſt can wiſh them to be. Finding nothing that need impede my progreſs, I paſs on to page 96, where, in purſuance of your plan adopted in a former letter, you place the Guide to the Church in oppoſition to the church of England on the ſubject of the Seventeenth Article. A ſingle obſervation or two upon this head will be ſufficient; for if what I maintain be true, that the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of predeſtination annexed to this Article is not the *genuine ſenſe of the church of England*, nothing in my book will be found in contradiction to it.

The laſt clauſe in your contraſt muſt not however be paſſed by with ſo ſlight a notice. I ſay in my book, page 93, that "with reſpect to abſolute decrees determining the future ſalvation of individuals, I ſee nothing in *ſcripture* that leads me to conclude there are any ſuch." To this poſition you oppoſe the following quotation from a homily: "Scripture doth acknowledge but two places after this life; the one proper to the elect and bleſſed of GOD; the

other to the reprobates." This mode of proof may ſatisfy you, Sir: it does not diſſatisfy me, becauſe it convinces me, that in failure of proof from *ſcripture*, to which the appeal was made, you have had recourſe to an extract from the homily levelled againſt the Romiſh error of purgatory; but which, the moſt curſory reader muſt perceive, has not the leaſt application to the ſubject in queſtion.

I rejoice, and probably you may rejoice with me, that I ſpy land, being at length arrived at the concluding page of your third letter. It is not my wiſh to detain you longer than whilſt I add a remark or two more by way of concluſion.

The object of your third letter has been to eſtabliſh the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of election and predeſtination as the acknowledged doctrine of the church of England. The object in view in my reply to it has been to demonſtrate the contrary poſition. This has been done by an appeal to hiſtoric fact, which by bringing the reader acquainted with the circumſtances that accompanied the original eſtabliſhment of our preſent church doctrine, qualifies him to form a decided opinion on the ſubject. Unleſs, therefore, all conſiſtency be denied both to our reformers and our church, I have proved in the foregoing letter, if I have proved

any thing, that the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of predeſtination cannot be the *genuine ſenſe of the church of England.*

One word more, and I have done.

When I conſider the diſadvantage that has accrued to the Chriſtian cauſe from the too curious inveſtigation of this ſubject, how much the human paſſions have been mixed up with it, and how little good has been produced by any thing that has been ſaid upon it, I am inclined to wiſh that a ſubject which has diminiſhed our charity without increaſing our knowledge, might be laid to reſt for ever. The longer I live in the world, the more I am convinced that religious controverſy tends (if I may ſo ſay) more to the wearing of the fleſh than to the growth of the ſpirit. In following the Apoſtle's direction to provoke one another to love and to do good works, we ſhall be ſure to be profitably engaged; for charity will live whilſt the underſtanding all myſteries and all knowledge may periſh with its poſſeſſor. Calviniſts, however diſtinguiſhed for their exemplary character, have, generally ſpeaking, been too apt to follow the example of their prototype, with whom the worſt word* was

* Thoſe who differ from CALVIN upon his favoured points, he ſcrupled not to call, "Perfidi et impii nebulones; ſtulti homines; virulenti iſti canes." And their doctrines he called, "Deliria:

not at times thought too bad for thoſe who did not ſee the doctrine of grace in the exact light in which he ſaw it. I honour their zeal, I reſpect their piety, at the ſame time that I lament their want of knowledge, of judgment, and of charity. Although your language is not, I confeſs, cloathed in ſo coarſe a dreſs as ſome that I have received from anonymous quarters on the ſubject of my book, yet I think the idea conveyed in your 91ſt page does not, in point of charity, fall much ſhort of any that I have been treated with; where you ſay, that you believe "few will preſume to queſtion the doctrine of *particular election*," &c. (in the ſenſe in which it is underſtood by Calviniſts) but thoſe who are ſtrangers to the power of ſin in themſelves, or to the riches of grace in GOD."

I forbear a comment. Permit me only to remind you, Sir, of the words of GREGORY NAZIANZEN, when, lamenting over the contentions among Chriſtians, he thus expreſſed himſelf: "The only godlineſs we glory in, is to find ſomewhat whereby we may judge others to be ungodly." GREG. NAZ. in Apol.

But though as an honeſt man I ſhall never ſhrink from what I conceive to be truth, on account of the

Impii errores; inſulſitas." Vide Epiſtolæ Coll. 142: Inſtitut. lib. III. cap. xxiii. ſec. 2.

obloquy with which the profecution of it may be accompanied; yet, Sir, I can aſſure you I would rather loſe my argument than maintain it in a manner inconſiſtent with the character of a Chriſtian miniſter. In that character, in return for the uncharitableneſs of your judgment, where you ſuppoſe me capable of ſubſcribing to articles which I do not believe, and the conſequent ſeverity of the ſentence pronounced in the laſt page of your letter, my hearty deſire to GOD for you is, that your knowledge of Chriſtianity may ſo keep pace with your zeal, that you may become, what every Chriſtian miniſter muſt wiſh you to be, as orthodox in profeſſion, as I underſtand you now are exemplary in piety and in practice.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

[The reader, ſhould he be diſpoſed, may ſee the ſubject of the foregoing letter ſtill more fully handled, in anſwer to Mr. OVERTON, in "*Vindiciæ Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ*," chap. ii. ſec. 1 and 2.]

LETTER V.

SIR,

YOUR Letter now before me, though a long one, ſeems not to require a long anſwer; becauſe it is chiefly taken up, in conformity with the wretched faſhion of the times, with indiſcriminate cenſures of the eſtabliſhed clergy.

You do me the honour to inveſt me with the office of "ſpokeſman for the whole body." But having received no commiſſion from my brethren to plead their cauſe, they may probably wiſh, ſhould they think their defence neceſſary, to employ a more able advocate. I ſhall only take the liberty, therefore, of repeating what has been already ſaid in my Poſtſcript to occaſional Separatiſts, that whilſt I would "cordially join with you and every well-wiſher to his country, in bearing the moſt public teſtimony againſt that lukewarmneſs in the cauſe of CHRIST, that indifference and even daring contempt for religion, which

characteriſe the preſent age; and whilſt I admit, as in truth I muſt, that ſome of our clergy do not feel that intereſt for the Chriſtian cauſe which they ought to feel, and by their injudicious conformity to the manners of a diſſipated age leſſen that influence which their ſacred profeſſion ought to have in the world; I ſtill am inclined to think, that, taken as a body, they are more wanting in zeal than in knowledge. But upon this ſubject, were I diſpoſed, it would not well become me, ſenſible as I am of my own manifold defects, to enlarge." Guide, p. 304.

But though I feel myſelf juſtified in declining to enter on the general defence of my condemned brethren, yet it may be expected that I ſhould make ſome anſwer to what is particularly addreſſed to myſelf.

In page 131 you make an extract from my book, which appears to me to ſpeak plain language; but to you, it ſeems, it is perfectly unintelligible. Your comment upon it is this: "Now if any man upon earth can find out what meaning, drift, or ſyſtem is to be collected from the above jumble; or, to uſe the words of that good old martyr Biſhop LATIMER, *mingle mangle* of law and Goſpel, grace and works; I ſhall much extol his ingenuity, eſpecially if he can explain the latter part of the quotation."

I thought that I had written with ſufficient clearneſs upon this ſubject not to be miſunderſtood by any conſiderate reader. The idea in my mind upon it, appeared to myſelf to be perfectly clear; but as an author is not always ſo fortunate in his expreſſions, as to leave his reader fully poſſeſſed of his meaning, I am obliged to you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity of reviewing my ground. It is certainly moſt important ground. As ſuch, if it be not maintainable upon my plan, I ſhall, upon conviction, be the firſt to give it up.

In the paſſage to which you ſo ſtrongly object, deſcribing it as a *mingle mangle* of law and Goſpel, grace and works, the poſition laid down is this—that fallen man, through the redemption by JESUS CHRIST, has been placed in a ſalvable condition; and that obedience to the moral law upon the Goſpel plan is neceſſary to render the Chriſtian ſcheme complete, by qualifying fallen man for (or in the language of the Apoſtle, making him meet to be partaker of) the ſalvation that has been purchaſed for him by the merits of a crucified SAVIOUR.

Thus far I ſtill think the ground firm. The redemption of the world by JESUS CHRIST was *general*. The benefit of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, we are in-

formed by the Apoſtle, was *co-extenſive* with the fatal effects of ADAM's fall. Rom. v. 18. If the redemption of the world by CHRIST had placed man in a ſtate of *abſolute* ſalvation, all men muſt in conſequence have been ſaved.

But even among thoſe to whom the Goſpel was firſt preached, we are told, that *many* were called, but *few* choſen. So it is in all ages of the church. Many are called by the preaching of the Goſpel, but few, comparatively ſpeaking, embrace it; conſequently few will be ſaved by it. What, then it may be aſked, did the redemption by CHRIST do for fallen man in general? I anſwer, it removed a fatal ſtumbling-bock out of his way; it opened a door which had been ſhut againſt him, and at the ſame time furniſhed him with the ability to enter in at it.

In a word, it reſtored fallen man to that right to eternal life, which had been forfeited by ADAM's breach of the condition on which it was originally ſuſpended; a right derived only from Divine promiſe, and which by the mercy of the ſecond covenant in JESUS CHRIST was re-eſtabliſhed on a different but more ſecure condition. When we ſpeak, therefore, with reference to man being removed out of the condemned ſtate of fallen nature, into a renewed

ſtate of grace under the ſecond covenant, we may be underſtood to mean, that he has thereby been placed in a ſtate of *actual* ſalvation; but when, ſpeaking with an eye to his *final* condition, we ſay that redemption by CHRIST placed him, not in a ſtate of *actual*, but of *poſſible* or *conditional* ſalvation; a ſalvation in ſome meaſure dependent upon his conduct under the appointed means of grace. A concluſion which evidently follows from the nature of that judgment which is finally to be paſſed upon him: for the Son of Man "ſhall come in the glory of his Father, and then ſhall he reward every man according to his works."

Poſſeſſed of this leading idea, the reader will be prepared for the explanation of the latter part of the quotation. "The line between the covenant of works and covenant of grace cannot, I ſay, be too exactly or too frequently marked out; becauſe, as man is now circumſtanced, the one is a covenant of death, the other a covenant of life."

On this part of my work, I have to thank you, Sir, for the opportunity your comment has afforded me for re-conſideration. By reference to the learned Biſhop BULL,* I have certainly acquired information

* "Diſcourſe on the State of Man before the Fall." See BULL's Works, octavo edit. vol. iii. diſc. v.

more correct than I poſſeſſed when I originally handled the point under review; and conſidering the imperfection of the human intellect, together with the progreſſive ſtate of all acquired knowledge, I feel more cauſe for ſatisfaction than humiliation in the acknowledgment of my being wiſer to-day than I was yeſterday. From the ſubſtance of the information that has been received, my concluſion is, that the language above made uſe of, by which two covenants, one of *works*, another of *grace*, appear oppoſed to each other, as characteriſtic of the two different diſpenſations under which man ſince his creation has been placed, is certainly incorrect. "For it is not true," as my able reviewer (probably on the ſame authority) has obſerved, "that according to the *firſt* covenant he who kept the law, would have had a claim of *right* to life, as the covenanted reward of duty performed; if by *life* be meant *eternal life*, and by duty be meant moral virtue and rational piety; eternal life under every diſpenſation having been a free gift,"* to be ſecured only on the performance of a ſtipulated condition. Could man even in his ſtate of innocence *by his works* have acquired a right to

* See Review of the "Appendix to the Guide" in the "Britiſh Critic" for March 1809.

eternal life, it muſt have been on the ground that he was capable of doing what neceſſarily laid an obligation on the Author and Giver of life to confer it. But both the language of ſcripture as well as that of the primitive church is in direct contradiction to ſuch an arrogant and blaſphemous pretenſion. "If thou be righteous, (ſays ELIHU in reproof to JOB) what giveſt thou Him? Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man; therefore doth JOB open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge." JOB 35. "The friendſhip of GOD (ſays IRÆNÆUS) grants immortality to them that come unto Him: therefore in the beginning GOD formed ADAM, not *becauſe he needed man*, but that he might have an object whereon to place his bounty. Our ſervice to GOD doth not *give any thing to him*, nor doth GOD *need* man's obedience; but *He gives* life and incorruption and *eternal glory* to thoſe that follow and obey Him."* Man was not created, ſtrictly ſpeak-

* "Amicitiam DEI immortalitatis eſſe condonatricem iis, qui aggrediuntur eum." "Igitur initio non quaſi indigens DEUS hominis plaſmavit ADAM, ſed ut haberet in quem collocaret ſua beneficia, &c. Servitus erga DEUM DEO quidem nihil præſtat, nec opus eſt DEO humano obſequio: ipſe autem ſequentibus et ſervientibus ei vitam et incorruptelam et gloriam æternam attribuit." IRÆNÆUS, lib. iv. cap. 28.

ing, *immortal*, but capable of immortality; poſſeſſed, as GROTIUS obſerved, not of a *vivifick* power, that is a power actually giving life, but of a *vital* power, a power ſo diſpoſed as to preſerve life for ever by the uſe of appointed means. The tree of life was appointed for that purpoſe, and ſo called by way of diſtinction, becauſe it was either a ſacrament and Divine ſign, or elſe a natural means of immortality: either becauſe it was through Divine power inveſted with a quality to repair the decays of nature, or becauſe the due participation of it was accompanied with thoſe ſpiritual effects which were the pledge or earneſt of immortality to the party. The reaſon for ADAM's excluſion from Paradiſe after his fall is thus expreſsly given by GOD himſelf, "leſt he ſhould put forth his hand, and take alſo of the fruit of the tree of life, and *live for ever*." Immortality, then, according to Divine appointment, was to have been obtained by eating of the tree of life. But as every thing in Paradiſe, from the different parts of ſcripture in which alluſion is made to it, is concluded to have been *emblematical*, it ſhould ſeem that a material tree (as Biſhop HORNE* has obſerved in his

* See Biſhop HORNE's excellent Diſcourſes on "The Tree of Life, and The Tree of Knowledge." Vol. i. diſc. 3 and 4.

excellent Diſcourſes on this ſubject) could only confer *eternal life* as a Divinely-inſtituted ſymbol or ſacrament; as "an outward viſible ſign of an inward ſpiritual grace, given to ADAM as a means whereby he was to receive the ſame, and a pledge to aſſure him thereof." The uſe of and conſequent advantage to be derived from this tree were ſuſpended, on the condition of ADAM's abſtaining from another tree which ſtood near it, with many tempting qualities belonging to it, called the "tree of knowledge of good and evil." ADAM's trial, therefore, conſiſted in the exerciſe of his faith and dependence on GOD, and the complete ſubordination of his ſenſual appetite to his ſpiritual affections. His trial was, whether he would ſo far believe in GOD, as to look forward to the complete attainment of ſpiritual happineſs according to the Divine plan, and in obedience to the Divine command; or ſeek an happineſs for himſelf, by applying for it to a forbidden object of temporal gratification, "of which the tree in queſtion muſt have been an emblematical repreſentation." The grand trial was, in ſhort, what it ever hath been, and ever will be, till the world ſhall ceaſe to exiſt, a trial between earth and heaven; whether things viſible or things inviſible ſhould have the preference; whe-

ther ADAM would walk by *ſight*, or by *faith*. ADAM choſe the former, and in conſequence fell. Under the new covenant, which ſucceeded to the fall, man's trial is of a ſimilar kind. Through the Mediator of this covenant, the immortality loſt by ADAM has been reſtored by JESUS CHRIST; but ſtill on certain conditions. To Chriſtians JESUS CHRIST may be conſidered as ſtanding in the place of the tree of life: and their trial is, whether they will go to CHRIST in faith, repentance, and obedience, for that happineſs which has been graciouſly provided for them, or whether they will go to the world, that tree of knowledge of good and evil, and ſeek it from thoſe gratifications of ſenſe which it holds forth, continually tempting and ſeducing them into the path of death. Under the Goſpel then, as under the firſt diſpenſation in Paradiſe, eternal life is "the gift of GOD." No claim of *right* conſequently can in one caſe more than in the other be maintained on the ground of ſervice performed; the poſſeſſion of the gift under each diſpenſation having been ſuſpended on conditions analogous to the circumſtances of the party. According to the tenour of the Goſpel covenant, "eternal life is the gift of GOD through JESUS CHRIST; whilſt the works of a Chriſtian performed in faith

and ſincerity, though not his *title to ſalvation*, are ſtill to be conſidered as his qualification for it; on which account they have been made the conditions on which, for the manifeſtation of GOD's honour and glory in the regeneration of his fallen creature, the covenant of grace has been made to depend. "For (ſays the Apoſtle) we are his workmanſhip created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD has before ordained that we ſhould walk in them." Eph. ii. 10. We have a ſupernatural principle of new life conferred on us through faith in CHRIST, by which we become enabled to perform thoſe good works which GOD has ordained as neceſſary to ſalvation, according to the terms of the Goſpel covenant.

Not being able to ſpeak more plainly upon this ſubject, were I to write a volume, I cannot but flatter myſelf that my readers will think further enlargement unneceſſary. I ſhall therefore treſpaſs upon their patience, only whilſt I make a brief remark or two on the objections that you have brought againſt the foregoing poſition.

You ſay (what nobody, it is preſumed, will deny) "that the law always was that it now is, and ever will be; and it is the ſame with the Goſpel." But,

Sir, I conceive that the different circumſtances which man may be in does alter the nature of the law ſo far as it reſpects him. The law, it ſhall be allowed, is the ſame *in itſelf*, but the language of the law to man in *innocence*, and to man *falleh*, differs in this reſpect; to the one it preſcribed a duty which he was enabled to perform; to the other a duty, which through the infirmity of his nature he cannot perform; therefore whilſt to the *former* it might in ſome ſenſe have been a *law of life*, to the *latter* it muſt be a *law of death*.

You deſcribe the law and Goſpel thus: "The former ſays, *obey* and live; the latter, believe and be ſaved." If you mean thus to contra-diſtinguiſh the law from the Goſpel, by oppoſing the *obedience* of the one to the *belief* of the other, I conceive your diſtinction to be in no ſenſe correct, and certainly not ſcriptural. For the faith or the belief of the Goſpel comprehends under it *obedience*, otherwiſe it is not true Chriſtian faith. To prevent, therefore, that deception which upon ſo delicate a ſubject has prevailed more or leſs in all ages of the church, by which part of the Goſpel has been taken for the whole of it, I conceive your definition ſhould have been worded thus; the law ſays, "Obey and live." The Goſpel, "Believe, obey, and be ſaved."

But you go on to ſay, "that obedience to the commandmeuts of the moral law has been totally excluded from having any thing to do in the buſineſs of a ſinner's pardon and acceptance."

Give me leave to aſk, when and by whom was obedience to the moral law excluded? Was it excluded by our SAVIOUR, when he told the young man, that if he would enter into life he muſt keep the commandments? Was it excluded by him, when, at the concluſion of his ſermon upon the mount, he ſaid, "Not every one that ſaith unto me LORD, LORD, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will* of my Father which is in heaven." MATT. vii. 21. Was it excluded by the Apoſtle, when after treating at large of juſtification, as it were, to prevent lal miſtake upon the ſubject, he concluded thus: "Do we then make void the law through faith? GOD forbid. Yea, we eſtabliſh the law." The Apoſtle eſtabliſhed the law, by proving that the ſubſtance correſponded to the ſhadow; that in JESUS CHRIST all the legal types had been fulfilled, and conſequently that he was the end of the law for righteouſneſs: and as he eſtabliſhed the typical law, by proving it to have been fulfilled in CHRIST; ſo alſo did he eſtabliſh the moral law, (which had

been reſtored by CHRIST to its ſpiritual meaning) by making it an eſſential part of the Goſpel diſpenſation, where he ſays to his diſciples, "In JESUS CHRIST neither circumciſion availeth any thing, nor uncircumciſion, but keeping the commandments of GOD." 1 Cor. vii. 19.

"Love to GOD and our neighbour (you proceed to ſay) are the fruits of being brought into a ſtate of ſalvation through CHRIST alone."

They certainly are ſo, becauſe theſe fruits are not produced but by men in that ſtate. But though the fruits of the Spirit are the conſequence of man's being brought into a ſtate of ſalvation, yet they are not the *neceſſary* conſequence of that important event; for if they were, then every man brought into a ſtate of ſalvation would be what that ſtate was deſigned to make him—a *ſpiritual man.*

But facts prove this not to be the caſe. Therefore, by man's being brought into a ſtate of ſalvation, and by his being in a ſtate of *final* acceptance with GOD, two very different things are meant. It is to a want of proper diſcrimination between man's *initial* and *final* ſalvation, that the confuſion which has ſo frequently prevailed on this ſubject may be attributed. Fallen man is brought into a ſtate of ſalvation *by*

baptiſm. With his admiſſion into this ſtate his works can have nothing to do. It is a ſtate of ſalvation provided by the free grace of GOD, to the partaking of which nothing is required on the part of man but a profeſſion of faith in a crucified SAVIOUR. One of the grand privileges annexed to man's admiſſion into this ſtate is the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt; in other words, the reſtoring to man that ſpiritual aſſiſtance by which he may be enabled to lead that holy and religious life which can alone qualify him for admiſſion into a better world. By this Divine aſſiſtance fallen man has a power, according to the tenour of the Tenth Article, "to do works pleaſant and acceptable to GOD." Now as GOD doeth nothing in vain, it cannot be a matter of indifference, whether the object for which the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt was granted, be accompliſhed or not. It follows then, that if GOD has vouchſafed to man under the Goſpel covenant a power to do works pleaſant and acceptable to himſelf, works ſo performed muſt have ſomething to do with a ſinner's pardon and acceptance with GOD.

I do not ſay that they will be the *meritorious* cauſe of his ſalvation, nor indeed any cauſe at all, taking the word *ſtrictly* as productive of a certain effect;

for no works performed by man at any time could ſet up a claim of *right* to eternal life as the wages for ſervice performed; whilſt at the ſame time they may be a conſideration, on account of which GOD will be pleaſed under the Goſpel covenant to accept a fallen, repentant, and obedient ſinner, for the ſake of what an all-gracious SAVIOUR has done and ſuffered for him. For after all that JESUS CHRIST has done and ſuffered for man, he is ſtill "the Author of eternal ſalvation only to them that obey him." Heb. v. 9.

Our reformers, if I miſtake not, in *The Erudition of a Chriſtian Man*, publiſhed in 1543, ſpake ſtill more ſtrongly on this point; when under the article *good works* they ſay, "foraſmuch as they be done in the faith of CHRIST, and by the virtue and merits of his paſſion their imperfectneſs is ſupplied, the merciful goodneſs of GOD accepteth them as an obſervation and fulfilling of his law; and they be the very ſervice of GOD, and be *meritorious* towards the attaining of everlaſting life." HOM. on good Works.

From the foregoing premiſes our concluſion is, that the diſtinction between the covenant of works and covenant of grace, between the law and the Goſpel, ſo frequently though incautiouſly made, when conſidered with reference to *eternal life*, is certainly

an incorrect one. We know of no covenant or diſpenſation under which man has been ever placed, according to the tenour of which a claim of *right* to eternal life on the ſcore of works could be maintained. And ST. PAUL, with an eye to the law, ſays expreſsly, "if there had been a law which could have *given life*, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law." Gal. iii. 21. When therefore mention is made of the law giving life as the reward of obedience, the law of MOSES is to be underſtood; and by life, the attainment only of temporal promiſes; for with reſpect to *eternal* life, the law could never give it. Under the firſt diſpenſation in Paradiſe the law could not give it, becauſe, as it has been above obſerved, eternal life was originally the free gift of GOD, ſuſpended on a condition ſuited to man in his ſtate of innocence. Subſequent to the fall the law could not give it, becauſe the promiſe had given it before; for, as the Apoſtle argues, "had the *law* given it, the promiſe of GOD in CHRIST, made four hundred and thirty years before, muſt have been made of none effect." Gal. iii. 17. Conſidering then the Jewiſh diſpenſation as a *peculiar* one, deſigned only for a temporay purpoſe, and to be introductory to the accompliſhment of GOD's general plan for the ſalvation of man through

JESUS CHRIST; we have to obſerve, that with reſpect to any *claim of right to eternal life*, man has ſtood on the ſame footing from the beginning. To ADAM eternal life, as the gift of GOD, was promiſed on the condition of his abſtinence from the forbidden tree. Under the Goſpel diſpenſation, "eternal life," now become "the gift of GOD through JESUS CHHIST," is ſuſpended on conditions ſuited to man's fallen nature. Still, as in the former caſe, man's claim is but a claim of *grace*, founded on the promiſe of Him who ſaid, that "he that believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have *everlaſting* life. The performance of which promiſe is to be ſecured to man on thoſe conditions which have been annexed to it; for the fulfilment of which, under the Goſpel covenant, the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit hath been expreſsly vouchſafed. If, in the foregoing attempt to diſtinguiſh between the paradiſiacal and Goſpel diſpenſation, in other words, between that diſpenſation under which ADAM was originally placed, and that under which man has been placed ſubſequent to the fall, my language is obnoxious to the charge of being a *mingle mangle* of law and Goſpel, grace and works, I ſubmit quietly to it, from a conviction that it is not in my power to write with more preciſion on this ſubject.

On a queſtion of ſuch magnitude, it is my earneſt wiſh that, if poſſible, my meaning ſhould not be miſtaken.

You, and your friend Mr. WILBERFORCE, (for now I underſtand that you both ſpeak the ſame language) ſeem perfectly agreed in decrying good works. It is not meant that ſuch is the object you really have in view, but that your language, for want of its being ſufficiently marked, is calculated to lead the reader to ſuch concluſion. Far be it from me, Sir, not to give both Mr. W. and yourſelf full credit for your zeal on this occaſion; at the ſame time I ſay, I truſt without offence, that to me it appears to be injudicious; becauſe, as the ſubject ſtrikes me, it has led to a partial repreſentation of the Goſpel plan of ſalvation. You both ſpeak the truth, but, as I conceive, not the whole truth; thereby promoting that deception, which has at all times more or leſs prevailed among Chriſtian profeſſors. When placing the Goſpel in oppoſition to the law, (which by the bye never ſhould be done, becauſe ſuch oppoſition is calculated to lead into error) you deſcribe it thus: "That man is *to believe and be ſaved;* and that obedience to the moral law has nothing to do with his pardon and acceptance with GOD." Mr. WILBERFORCE, after making mention of that tremendous day, when ac-

ording to the declaration of our SAVIOUR, "He ſhall judge every man according to his works," concludes with the following ſtrange application, "*Vain wiſdom all, and falſe philoſophy*;" and with the view of fixing in the reader's mind the idea meant to be conveyed by it, he refers him to a part of ſcripture, where our SAVIOUR, ſpeaking upon a very different ſubject, ſays, "This is the work of GOD, that ye believe in Him whom he hath ſent."

If the reader will take the trouble to turn to his Bible, he will find that our SAVIOUR upon this occaſion, in addreſſing himſelf to the multitude that followed him for the loaves and fiſhes, took advantage of their eagerneſs for the gratification of the cravings of the body, to remind them of the proviſion neceſſary to be made for the wants of the ſoul. "Work not (ſays he) for the meat that periſheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlaſting life, which the Son of Man ſhall give unto you. Then ſaid they unto him, what ſhall we do that we may work the works of GOD; that we may ſo work as to have the ſaid meat of which you are ſpeaking. JESUS anſwered and ſaid unto them, This is the work of GOD, that ye believe in Him whom he hath ſent." This is the work required of you by GOD, that ye believe in me

as the promiſed Meſſiah, whom the Father hath ſent to guide you in ſuch things as relate to your ſpiritual welfare.

Now to place this paſſage as it were in oppoſition to a plain declaration of our SAVIOUR's, delivered upon a different occaſion, reſpecting the final judgment of the world, appears to be not ſo much to explain ſcripture, as to confuſe and miſrepreſent it.

GOD requires, as an eſſential condition of ſalvation, that "we believe in him whom he hath ſent." Our SAVIOUR declares, "that every man ſhall be judged according to his works." Theſe two paſſages are certainly not at variance, and therefore ought not to be brought to oppoſe each other. By the firſt we are informed, that we muſt believe in CHRIST to be ſaved. By the ſecond we are given to underſtand, that by the fruits of the ſpirit, manifeſted in an holy and religious life, man's everlaſting condition will be determined.

The other paſſage which Mr. WILBERFORCE has brought forward, with a view of deſtroying what he calls the *flimſy webb*, which he would give the world to underſtand, the clergy in general are employed in weaving, (but which does by no means contain a fair repreſentation of the manner in which

the Goſpel is generally preached in the church) is taken from an epiſtle of ST. JOHN, where the Apoſtle ſays, "This is the commandment that we ſhould believe in the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST."

By turning to the Bible you find that this quotation from the Apoſtle is a *partial* one, and contains only half the information which was deſigned to be conveyed on the occaſion. The whole paſſage runs thus: "This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe in the name of his Son JESUS CHRIST, and *love one another*, as he gave us commandment." Here then we have two commandments delivered by the ſame authority; one relative to faith in CHRIST, the other enjoining the love of our neighbour, which is elſewhere called *the fulfilling of the law*. Mr. WILBERFORCE, by his manner of quoting the Apoſtle, gives his reader to underſtand, that to *believe* is the great New Teſtament command of GOD. It is ſo; but the fallacy lies here, that it is not the *only* commandment to which the Chriſtian is required to pay attention. And if the Chriſtian read the Goſpel as Mr. WILBERFORCE quotes it upon this occaſion, he will probably be a Chriſtian by *halves*, inſtead of being that *perfect* character which the Apoſtle deſigned he ſhould be, by recommending a *faith which*

worketh by love. And that the firſt of theſe commandments reſpecting faith in CHRIST does not *neceſſarily* comprehend the laſt, reſpecting man's fulfilment of the moral law, we may conclude, from the Apoſtle's thinking it neceſſary to make a ſeparate mention of them both.

Give me leave to aſk, why ſhould pains be taken by perſons having the honour of GOD and ſalvation of man at heart, (as you and Mr. WILBERFORCE certainly have) to miſrepreſent the Goſpel, by making it ſpeak a language which it does not acknowledge? We ſhould not be afraid of a doctrine that is in itſelf true, becauſe it has been abuſed; but endeavour ſo to ſtate it, that it may not be liable to future abuſe. The danger is not in the doctrine itſelf, but in the corruption of it. Let it be reſtored to its ſcripture ſtandard, and it will be both wholeſome and good. Inſtead, therefore, of keeping the *doctrine of good works* out of ſight, leſt a dangerous concluſion ſhould be drawn from it, as Mr. WILBERFORCE in this inſtance appears to do; and inſtead of ſaying, as you do, that "obedience to the moral law has nothing to do with a ſinner's pardon and acceptance with GOD, let us fairly bring the doctrine forward; and, by placing works in their proper ſcale, ſtrip

them of the poſſibility of doing injury to the Chriſtian cauſe, and render them inſtrumental to its promotion; and this can effectually be done by giving our readers fully to underſtand what kind of dependence is to be placed on them.

By the grace of GOD, under the new covenant, Chriſtians (in the language of our church for the fifteenth Sunday after Trinity) pray "that they may be led to things *profitable to their ſalvation.*" It ought, therefore, to be a primary object with every Chriſtian, that the grace of GOD be not beſtowed upon him in vain. Such is the manner in which the Goſpel was preached by the Apoſtles: in the ſame manner it was preached by our reformers; and in no other manner can it be preached, to become effectual to ſalvation. "For the grace of GOD, that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs and wordly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world." On this condition, the Chriſtian may with confidence look "for that bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great GOD, and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST; who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all ini-

quity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works."

On which account I conceive, that the preaching of the Christian ministry must be, in this sense, that *mingle mangle* of law and Gospel, grace and works, of which the Apostles have given a striking specimen in their writings: and he who attempts to preach the law unconnected with the Gospel, or the grace of the Gospel independent of obedience to the moral law, does equal injustice to the gracious and at the same time righteous plan of salvation by JESUS CHRIST, and frustrates the design of it, by placing himself under a dispensation essentially different from it. To understand properly the language of ST. PAUL and that of our reformers, two circumstances are necessary to be taken into our account. ST. PAUL, when writing against *works*, did not mean the good works of a Christian, living in a state of grace; but the works of the law, considered by the Judaising believer, as jointly necessary with the Gospel to justification; or, as they were considered by the unbelieving Jew, as sufficient alone to justification without the Gospel. Our reformers, when they laid the platform of our present church establishment, were principally solicitous to guard against the errors

of the church of Rome, of which the doctrine of *merit* conſtituted one of the groſſeſt kind. The church of England in her doctrine, therefore, has drawn the plain line of diſtinction between *works* and *works*. The works of the *mere moral* man ſhe unequivocally condemns, as totally unavailable to ſalvation, and having the nature of ſin in the eyes of GOD, becauſe they are done *without GOD*, are not performed upon a Chriſtian principle, and ſpring not of *faith in JESUS CHRIST*. Whilſt the good works of the *Chriſtian*, though performed upon a right principle, ſhe conſiders not *meritorious in themſelves*, on account of their imperfections; but neceſſary to be performed, becauſe they are pleaſant and acceptable to GOD, through the merits of an atoning SAVIOUR.

It being my deſign not to enter further into your fifth letter, than as it relates to my general ſubject, many pages have been paſſed over, in which your ideas either are not correctly expreſſed, or in my judgment are liable to exception. Indeed it is my wiſh to avoid the unpleaſant taſk of analyſing language, which I conceive to have been haſtily written; it being far more ſatisfactory to me to find out ſentiments in which we agree, than to examine thoſe in

which we appear to differ. If I know myſelf, I can with truth ſay with HOOKER, that " I have no joy in ſtriving, I have not been nuzzled or trained up in it. I would to GOD that the purport of CHRIST's prayer for his diſciples—that they might remain undivided—might be realiſed throughout Chriſtendom." With this ſentiment ſtrongly impreſſed on my mind, I feel a ſatisfaction, after having travelled over many pages in which we appear to differ, to find one page (140) in which I perfectly concur with you; " that this is a critical juncture, in which the clergy ſhould do every thing in their power to ſtop that foaming torrent of irreligion, profaneneſs, and contempt of all order, good government, and ſubordination, which has for ſome time been coming in upon us like a flood; and I am certain they cannot do this more effectually than by diligently exerting themſelves in the reſtoration of thoſe pure principles, by which the Reformation was happily effected among us."

You will give me leave only, as one of the clergy, to remind you, Sir, of what, it is preſumed, has been proved in a former letter, that the doctrine of *abſolute unconditional election* and juſtification of certain individuals, independent of the conduct of the party,

was not the doctrine of the Reformation; and at the ſame time to ſuggeſt to your ſerious conſideration, whether ſuch a doctrine, with the conſequences which have more or leſs been drawn at all times from it, is ſo well calculated to produce the deſired effect, as that which the church of England teaches; when ſhe gives her members to underſtand, that repentance, faith, and obedience, through Divine grace, are the terms or conditions upon which they may look for ſalvation unto CHRIST; who "being made perfect became (the Apoſtle tells us) the author of eternal ſalvation unto all them that *obey him.*" Heb. v. 9.

Having, I perſuade myſelf, replied to every part of your letter which relates to the general ſubject before me, what applies perſonally to myſelf in it may be paſſed over unnoticed, as not affecting the main argument, with which alone the reader is concerned. Taking leave therefore to remind you, that "He that judgeth me is the LORD,"

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

I Never enter upon a freſh letter, without lamenting the diſagreeable neceſſity of undertaking the defence of a book, which, if read in the ſame ſpirit with which it was written, would, I flatter myſelf, require none. When a man's conduct is viewed through a wrong medium, it rarely happens that the judgment formed of him is correct. A prejudiced judgment, like a jaundiced eye, gives a falſe colour to the object before it, at the ſame time, perhaps, that the judging party is himſelf perfectly inſenſible of the effect.

An author, more eſpecially ſhould he be a miniſter of CHRIST, and writing in theſe days of licentious opinion upon church matters, ought not however to be diſappointed, ſhould not every reader give him that credit, to which, from the ſincerity of his intention, he is entitled.

I have been led into the foregoing train of thought by the obſervation of the heavy ſentence which you have made me paſs upon thoſe Chriſtians who ſeparate from the church. Still it affords me no inconſiderable ſatisfaction to think, that the book which you ſuppoſe to contain that ſentence has been read by many men of underſtanding and judgment, with whoſe opinion any author might be flattered, to whom ſuch an idea has never preſented itſelf. Unleſs, therefore, the uncharitable idea can be fairly drawn from my words, taken in a plain and unperverted ſenſe, I have a right to plead that rule of candour under which you ſhelter yourſelf, according to which all concluſions drawn for an author which he does not acknowledge, are not to be anſwered for by him, but by the party who draws them.

Had you been diſpoſed to give the author of "*The Guide to the Church*" credit for that charity towards his brethren who differ from him in religious matters which he feels, more paſſages are to be found in his book to juſtify ſuch a concluſion in his favour, than are to be found to ſupport the one you have thought proper to draw from him. Give me leave, Sir, to point out a few ſuch paſſages, which, in an apparent

haſty zeal for the cauſe you eſpouſe, ſeem to have eſcaped your obſervation.

In page 421 you find me ſpeaking thus ſtrongly, and I preſume you will allow *charitably*, upon the ſubject of Separation from the Church. "The miniſter of the church, however, who conſtantly prays againſt ſchiſm, ſhould in conſequence think it his duty to prevent Chriſtians, as far as may be, from falling into ſo dangerous a ſin; and whilſt he remembers of what ſpirit a Chriſtian ought to be, the means made uſe of by him for the purpoſe will be no other than what a Chriſtian ought to employ. Without pronouncing ſentence therefore upon or diſturbing thoſe who are without the church, his object will be to preſerve thoſe that ſtill remain in it," &c. In page 46 you find me ſpeaking the ſame charitable language. "Cuſtom has indeed ſo far reconciled us to the diviſions that have taken place among Chriſtians, that they are no longer ſeen in the light in which they were ſeen in the primitive days of the church; whilſt charity, forbidding us to ſpeak harſhly of the ſpiritual condition of our brethren, has in a manner tended to efface the ſin of ſchiſm from our minds. But though *we preſume to judge no man*, leaving all judgment to that Being who is alone qualified to make allowance

for the ignorance, invincible prejudice, imperfect reaſonings, and miſtaken judgments of his frail creatures, yet muſt it not from hence be concluded, that it is a matter of indifference whether Chriſtians communicate with the church or not, or that there is a doubt upon the ſubject of ſchiſm, whether it be a ſin or not." In page 314, ſpeaking of BAXTER and his ejected brethren, "in the laſt century, I ſpeak of them as pious learned miniſters, and in common with every well-wiſher to the cauſe of religion, lament the exiſtence of thoſe unhappy prejudices which deprived the church of their miniſterial labours."

You favour me with a paſſage from Dr. SAUNDERSON, whom you call an able and ſtrenuous advocate for our national church, where he ſays, "For my own part, I make no doubt, nor dare I be ſo uncharitable as to think, but that many of them have honeſt, and upright, and ſincere hearts towards GOD, and are unfeignedly zealous of the truth and for religion. They that are ſuch no doubt feel the comfort of it in their own ſouls, and we ſee the fruits of it in their converſation, and rejoice at it." P. 169. Give me leave to aſk you, what does this paſſage contain that is not to be found, if the reader was diſpoſed to find it, in my book. I have repreſented

ſeparatiſts as *pious Chriſtians*, many of them exemplarily ſo, and in that reſpect a pattern worthy to be copied after. I can look up with as much reverence to the names of a WATTS, a LELAND, and a DODDRIDGE, as Chriſtians of diſtinguiſhed piety, as you or any diſſenter poſſibly can, at the ſame time that I lament their ſeparation from our church. And Dr. SAUNDERSON, though charitable in his judgment upon diſſenters as *Chriſtians*, poſſeſſed, I have no doubt, a ſimilar idea upon the ſubject of their ſeparation, or I do not underſtand upon what ground he could be a ſtrenuous able advocate for our national church: and could I not diſcriminate between the pious Chriſtian profeſſor and the member of the eſtabliſhed church, I ſhould be totally unqualified to write upon the ſubject I have undertaken.

Having pleaded thus far in arreſt of judgment in a caſe in which I feel myſelf deeply intereſted, becauſe no charge is ſo readily brought againſt the miniſters of the church of England as that of want of charity; and I believe no charge will, upon fair trial, be found more deſtitute of foundation; for I will venture to ſay, that upon an appeal to the diſſenters themſelves it will be admitted, that of all the Chriſtian ſocieties in this kingdom that of the church of England is by

far the moſt tolerant and the moſt charitable; having, I ſay, pleaded thus far in arreſt of judgment againſt a charge, which of all thoſe contained in your book I feel moſt anxious to ſet aſide, I proceed to the examination of the particular paſſage upon which your judgment againſt me in this reſpect has been formed. The paſſage in queſtion is taken, I perceive, from my tenth diſcourſe, which treats of the advantages attendant upon a conſcientious communion with the church, together with the diſadvantages conſequent on a wilful ſeparation from it.

One of the principal conſiderations neceſſary to be impreſſed upon the mind of the reader on this occaſion was the *commiſſion* from which the act of the miniſter of the church derived its validity, for the benefit of the parties concerned in it. The commiſſion to adminiſter the ſacraments of the church was originally delivered by our SAVIOUR to his Apoſtles, accompanied with a power to inveſt others with the ſame important office. From this Divine fountain all authority in this caſe muſt be derived. "The prieſt is ordained (ſays the Apoſtle) for men in things pertaining to GOD." Heb. v. He then who is to act in things pertaining to GOD in the affairs of his church, muſt certainly have a commiſſion from GOD

to authoriſe him ſo to do. "No man (the Apoſtle tells us) taketh this honour unto himſelf," Heb. v. 4, "but he that is called of GOD." And in the church, as a viſible ſociety that muſt be governed by ſome external polity, an outward and viſible appointment to the offices in it is neceſſary; becauſe without ſuch an appointment no viſible ſociety could exiſt, and without the exiſtence of ſuch viſible ſociety as the church, the profeſſion of Chriſtianity would in time be extinguiſhed. "It cannot but be obſerved," ſays a judicious writer, who paid particular attention to this ſubject, and whoſe work I take leave to recommend, "that all the ſects and denominations of religion, whoſe names have been ever heard of in the world, have appeared under the form of viſible ſocieties; and if any particular enthuſiaſts have purſued any chimerical ſcheme of an *inviſible church*, their project has periſhed with them: and if CHRIST had left his church without any obligation to external union as a *viſible ſociety*, his religion had had the ſame fate, and been long ſince forgotten."*

From whence it has followed, that a regular reception of the Divine commiſſion, through the channel appointed to convey it, has been a circumſtance

* ROGERS on the Viſible and Inviſible Church, page 141.

which in every age of the church, from the times of the Apoſtles down to the preſent day, has been conſidered eſſential to the validity of the miniſterial office. For when CHRIST ſaid to his diſciples on the mount, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world;" it has been underſtood that his ſpirit and authority were to be with them as governors of the church, and their appointed ſucceſſors, in the due exerciſe of the commiſſion with which he then inveſted them, to the end of time. Now to ſuppoſe that nothing on this occaſion was *excluſively promiſed*, is to ſuppoſe that nothing was *excluſively granted*, and that the commiſſion delivered to particulars was deſigned to be exerciſed by mankind at large; an abſurdity againſt which we preſume it unneceſſary to argue. To quote from Biſhop REYNOLDS, (and I wiſh not better authority on this ſubject) "Neceſſary ordinances pre-ſuppoſe neceſſary officers to adminiſter them. CHRIST hath appointed neceſſary ordinances to be to the end of the world adminiſtered, therefore the officers who are to adminiſter them are neceſſary likewiſe. He did not appoint a work to be done, and leave it to the *wide world who ſhould do it*, but committed the miniſtry of reconciliation to ſtewards and ambaſſadors by him ſelected for that ſervice.

1 Cor. iv. 1; 2 Cor. v. 19. But it may be objected, others may promote theſe ends as well as miniſters; all believers are commanded to comfort, ſupport, edify one another; 1 Theſſ. v. 11, 14; JUDE, ver. 20; therefore no need of ſuch an office for the doing of them. For although every private Chriſtian in his place and ſtation ought to miniſter grace to the hearers, to have his ſpeeches ſeaſoned with ſalt, and fitted to the uſe of edifying, yet theſe great works are not done with the ſame authority, efficacy, certainty, or order, by a *private hand* as by *public officers.*"* "I was made a miniſter (ſays ST. PAUL) according to the gift of the grace of GOD given unto me." Eph. iii. 7. The Apoſtle (Biſhop ANDREWS obſerves) is here ſpeaking "of his *office*, and nothing elſe. The Apoſtleſhip was a grace, yet no ſaving grace, elſe ſhould JUDAS have been ſaved. Clearly then it is the grace of their calling whereby they were ſacred, and made perſons public, and their acts authentical, and they enabled to do ſomething about the remiſſion of ſins that is not (of like avail) done by others, though perhaps more learned and virtuous than they, in that they have not the like commiſſion. To ſpeak with the leaſt, as the act of one that is a

* Biſhop REYNOLDS' Works, fol. page 1055.

a public notary is of more validity than of another that is none, though (it may be) he writes a much fairer hand. This grace of an holy calling to the miniſtry of the Goſpel was conferred on the Apoſtles by CHRIST, has been derived from them to us, and from us to others, to the world's end." Biſhop ANDREWS' Sermon on John xx. 22.

If then a commiſſion was granted to particular perſons for an eſpecial purpoſe, and a bleſſing promiſed to the actual diſcharge of it; that bleſſing muſt be underſtood to be co-extenſive only with the due diſcharge of the commiſſion for which it was granted; unleſs it can be proved, that in conſequence of ſome new revelation from heaven the nature of that commiſſion has been changed, or ſuch circumſtances have taken place, as will juſtify man in making an alteration in the Divine plan.

But the *viſible* church of CHRIST, which has continued under the ſame epiſcopal form of government from the beginning, knows that there has been no new revelation, and that no circumſtances have taken place to juſtify any alteration in this caſe; ſo far from it, that every alteration in the government of the church has been conſidered to be an unwarrantable deviation from the original eſtabliſhment of

it; a deviation not likely to be attended with eventual ſucceſs, unleſs it can be ſuppoſed, that GOD (to whom all things are preſent) did not know the plan beſt calculated for the eſtabliſhment of his church.

Upon theſe grounds, therefore, it is concluded that the bleſſing originally promiſed to the regular diſcharge of the evangelic miniſtry is confined to that diſcharge of it, becauſe we have no warrant from ſcripture to authoriſe a contrary concluſion: and it is in conformity with this idea, which has prevailed in the church from the days of the Apoſtles down to the preſent times, namely, that it is the commiſſion which ſecures the Divine confirmation of the miniſterial act, that the ſacraments in the church have been conſidered as the *only* ſacraments that are duly adminiſtered. It is in conformity with this idea that ST. IGNATIUS ſays, "Let that ſacrament be deemed effectual and firm which is adminiſtered by the biſhop, or by him to whom the biſhop has committed it." Vide Guide, page 53. And it was a ſimilar idea, it ſhould ſeem, that your favourite Biſhop REYNOLDS had before him when he ſaid, "There are excellent works, which being done without the calling of GOD, do not edify, but diſturb the body. The way for the church to proſper and flouriſh is, for every

member to keep in his own rank and order, to remember his own meaſure, to act in his own ſphere, to manage his particular condition and relations with ſpiritual wiſdom and humility; the eye to do the work of an eye, the hand of an hand." *Vide Guide, p.* 54.

It has been from an unwillingneſs to give offence to thoſe brethren who have departed from the church, that leſs has been ſaid on this ſubject, of late years in particular, than ought have been ſaid by the clergy upon it. The conſequence of which has been, that a general want of diſcrimination has prevailed among Chriſtians, few having a clear idea in their minds of the characteriſtic difference between the church and the meeting-houſe, between the ſacraments adminiſtered in the *former*, and thoſe adminiſtered in the *latter;* a circumſtance for which I fear the clergy of the church will be anſwerable, becauſe it is a circumſtance which has tended, perhaps more than any other, to the growth of that indifference amongſt uninformed Chriſtians, with reſpect to the place of public worſhip which they frequent: and I wiſh it may not be from the judgment of the Head of the church upon the clergy of it for their great inattention to this important ſubject, that the knowledge of it is ſuffered to fall into that ſtate of almoſt general decline, which

portends ruin to that eſtabliſhment which they are profeſſionally bound to ſupport.

It is, I am ſorry to ſay, from that general ignorance about church matters which now prevails even among members of the church, that every miniſter, who attempts to talk, preach, or write on theſe ſubjects as he ought, is deemed guilty of a breach of charity. What you ſay of me, on the page you have quoted from my book, in page 201, that "*I deal out damnation by wholeſale*," only proves to me, that you can be little read in ſubjects of this kind; for otherwiſe you muſt have found yourſelf under the neceſſity of making the ſame memorandum which you have made in the margin of my book; in the margin of ST. IGNATIUS', and ST. CLEMENT'S, and ST. CYPRIAN'S writings; in ſhort, on thoſe of all the primitive fathers of the church. Nay, I know not how ST. JUDE himſelf could eſcape your cenſure, when, ſpeaking of thoſe who in his days were periſhing in the gainſaying of Core, he ſays, "theſe be they who *ſeparate* themſelves, ſenſual, having not the ſpirit." JUDE, verſe 19. The ſame idea is alſo to be found in ST. PAUL, where he ſays, that thoſe "who cauſe diviſions in the church, ſerve not the LORD JESUS." Rom. xv. 17. Thoſe

who ſeparated from the communion of the Apoſtolic church are condemned by ST. JUDE, as not having the ſpirit; "and without the ſpirit of CHRIST, (the Apoſtle tells us) we are none of his." Rom. viii. 9.

But there is no need of taking you ſo far back in the hiſtory of the Chriſtian church for conviction as to this point. I need only refer you to thoſe excellent diſcourſes, publiſhed by eminent divines of the church of England, under the title of 'London Caſes,' with a view of bringing back the Diſſenters into the church; and you will find yourſelf obliged to make the ſame marginal note on numberleſs paſſages in thoſe diſcourſes, which you have made on the paſſage in queſtion; becauſe the general idea upon which the writers of thoſe diſcourſes proceeded was, that the church of England was the *only viſible church of CHRIST in this country;* and that all congregations of Diſſenting Chriſtians, of whatever denomination, were ſo many ſeparations from it. For, if this had not been their confirmed idea; on the contrary, if they had thought that miniſters, in the church and out of it, were *equally* ambaſſadors of JESUS CHRIST, and conſequently that the ſacraments adminiſtered by each were adminiſtered by *equal* authority; they cer-

tainly threw away their time in writing upon a ſubject, which, in that caſe, could be of no importance.

But theſe celebrated divines, to whoſe diſcourſes I refer you, wrote not only the language of the primitive church, but alſo the undoubted language of that church, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member. To one of the canons of our church you have appealed for ſentence againſt me, for my ſuppoſed heterodoxy. Their authority, therefore, muſt doubtleſs be admitted by you in other caſes to which they apply. Give me leave then to obſerve, Sir, that what is ſaid in the obnoxious quotation under conſideration, reſpecting miniſters of the ſeparation not being ambaſſadors of CHRIST, and the ſacraments adminiſtered by them not being the ſacraments of CHRIST, is no more than what I have learned from theſe canons. The charge, therefore, which you have brought againſt me, for having "dealt out damnation by wholeſale; in other words, for withholding ſalvation from the whole body of Diſſenters, merely becauſe they are Diſſenters; ſuppoſing it to be ſubſtantiated, ought in equity to be brought againſt the convocation that firſt eſtabliſhed this doctrine. If you will take the trouble to read over attentively the 9th, 10th, and 11th canons, which

treat of ſchiſm, ſchiſmatics, and conventicles, you will find that they conſider the Apoſtolic church of England to be the *only viſible church* of CHRIST in this country, and all thoſe who ſeparate from it ſchiſmatics; and that "no meetings, aſſemblies, or congregations of the King's born ſubjects, but thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church, may rightly challenge to themſelves the name of true and lawful churches."

I would only obſerve, as I paſs on, that the Act of Toleration has made no difference in this caſe. For a permiſſion granted by the ſtate to aſſemblies of Chriſtians, ſeparated from the church of England, to meet for the purpoſe of performing religious ſervice, does not make them *true and lawful churches*; for that was what the ſtate had not power to make them. The Act of Toleration in fact reſpected them as members of the ſtate, not as members of the church.

We will now turn, if you pleaſe, to the 27th Article, which ſays, "that they that receive baptiſm *rightly*, are grafted into the church." Should there be any difficulty in aſcertaining the preciſe meaning of the word *rightly*, the 19th Article appears calculated to do it, which ſays, "that the *viſible church* is where the ſacraments be *duly* or *rightly* adminiſtered,

according to CHRIST's ordinance." But the canons above appealed to give us to underſtand, that the church of England is the *only* viſible church in this country; and that no meetings, congregations, or aſſemblies of Chriſtians, ſeparated from the church of England, may *rightly* challenge to themſelves the name of *true* and *lawful* churches. It follows then, from the compariſon thus made between the articles and canons, the authority of both which you admit, that in the church of England *only* the ſacraments are *duly* adminiſtered; and that it is only by a partaking of the ſacrament of baptiſm, thus *rightly* adminiſtered, that the Chriſtian becomes "grafted into the church."

Should the foregoing premiſes have been fairly drawn, and I am not conſcious to myſelf that they are otherwiſe, the quotation from my book, which has given riſe to this diſquiſition, muſt ſtill ſtand its ground. The doctrine contained in it is the doctrine of the church of England, and has been the uniform doctrine of the *viſible church* of CHRIST, from the days of its firſt eſtabliſhment. According to this doctrine, the ambaſſadors of CHRIST are thoſe *only* who have received their commiſſion from him through the regular channel which has been appointed to convey it; and

language of ST. IGNATIUS, *firm* and *effectual*, which are adminiſtered by thoſe ambaſſadors.

Such is the language which every miniſter of the church, who has made himſelf properly acquainted with this ſubject, will make uſe of, when he thinks it neceſſary to ſpeak upon it at all. Should there be any, who, from a general indifference to the cauſe in which they are engaged, from an ignorance of the nature of their high office, or from a deſire of acquiring the ſpecious character of *liberal* men, accommodate themſelves to the opinion of every Chriſtian they meet, ſuffering the validity of their Divine commiſſion to be called in queſtion, without an attempt to maintain it; the authority of ſuch miniſters in ſupport of the cauſe you plead, is not ſo much to be reſpected, as their conduct is to be lamented, reprobated, and deſpiſed.

A learned Biſhop of the preſent day has applied ſtill ſtronger language to this ſubject. "For thoſe (ſays he,* in his Charge in the year 1790) who have been nurtured in the boſom of the church, and have gained admiſſion to the miniſtry, if from a mean compliance with the humour of the age, or ambitious of the fame of *liberality of ſentiment*, (for under that

* Biſhop HORSELEY.

ſpecious name a profane indifference is made to paſs for an accompliſhment) they affect to join in the diſavowal of the authority which they ſhare, or are ſilent when the validity of their Divine commiſſion is called in queſtion; for any, I hope they are few, who hide this weakneſs of faith, this poverty of religious principle, under the attire of a gown and caſſock, they are, in my eſtimation, little better than infidels in maſquerade."

But, Sir, give me leave to aſk, ſuppoſe you were as perfectly convinced in your mind, of the eſtabliſhment of the viſible church of CHRIST upon earth under Epiſcopal government, as you appear to be of your favourite doctrine; as a miniſter, would you think you had diſcharged your duty to your Maſter, if, when you ſaw ignorant, deluded, and miſled people daily ſeparating from that church, and running after any and every one who called himſelf a miniſter, you did not take ſome pains to prevent further ſeparation; by giving the members of the church ſuch correct information on this ſubject, that they might know where the church of CHRIST was, and by whoſe hands alone the ſacraments of it were duly adminiſtered? Knowing your zeal, I need not wait your anſwer.

Have I then, as a miniſter of the church, done more in this caſe, than you would have done under ſimilar circumſtances? The object of my book you will find to be the ſame which the church had in view in the conſtruction of her articles and canons; namely, to induce Chriſtians to embrace that covenanted plan of ſalvation, which is offered to them by the miniſters of the viſible church. Should Chriſtians reject it, we lament the circumſtance, but refrain from denouncing any ſentence in the caſe; leſs than this we cannot do, if we would act conſiſtently with the character we are ſuppoſed to bear.

Permit me, Sir, to ſtate a plain caſe. Suppoſe an unſettled, wavering, and undetermined Chriſtian profeſſor ſhould put a ſimilar queſtion to me as a miniſter of the church, which the affrighted jailor heretofore put to ST. PAUL and SILAS in priſon, "Sir, what ſhall I do to be ſaved." My anſwer, if what it ought to be, muſt be to the following effect: "Believe in JESUS CHRIST, as the Saviour of the world; enter into covenant with him, by becoming a member of his church in the way he has appointed to make you ſuch; and live agreeably to the engagement you have entered into, and you will be in the ſure road to ſalvation." Suppoſe a ſecond queſtion ſhould be put

to me, to the following purpoſe: "But, Sir, many who believe in CHRIST, have not been admitted into his church in the appointed way you mean; what then is to become of them?" This I conceive is a queſtion which no miniſter is bound to anſwer. It contains a propoſition of a very different nature from the former, and changes the character of the ambaſſador for CHRIST into that of a judge of his fellow-Chriſtians.

We read in ſcripture, that "he that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved." We alſo know that there is a very conſiderable ſect in this country that totally reject the ſacrament of baptiſm. Should I be called upon to give an opinion on the condition of the members of ſuch an aſſociation, my anſwer would be in the language of ST. PAUL, "What have I to do, to judge them that are without; them that are without GOD judgeth;" 1 Cor. v. 12, 13.

When I ſpeak, as in my miniſterial character it is my duty to do, upon the covenanted plan of ſalvation in the church, I am pointing out to Chriſtians what I know to be the good and right way; but I do not thereby determine the conſequence of what appears to be a departure from it. When I ſay, upon the authority of the Divine word, that "in

the church there is abſolute ſecurity for every ſound member of it, and that I know of no ſecurity out of it, becauſe I find no part of ſcripture that authoriſes me to ſpeak confidently on that ſubject;" this appears to me to be only ſaying, that in a caſe where an undeniable ſecurity is offered, if there be perſons who chooſe to take up with what appears to be a doubtful one, they muſt abide by the conſequence. But this is not ſaying, that thoſe who prefer the leſſer ſecurity to the greater one have no ſecurity at all; in other words, that thoſe who have not thought fit to embrace the covenanted plan of ſalvation in the church of CHRIST, are therefore excluded from all hope of ſalvation. This is, indeed, what you would make me ſay: but I beg to obſerve, this is your concluſion, not mine; and it is a concluſion (ſo far from being warranted by my book) that I have taken ſome pains to guard againſt.

The church is repreſented in my book as the only *revealed* road to heaven. To thoſe who travel in it, as Chriſtians ought to travel, clothed "with the whole armour of GOD," (Eph. vi. 13, &c.) according to the Apoſtolic direction, ſalvation is certain; becauſe "He is faithful who hath promiſed." This, as a miniſter of the church, I feel myſelf authoriſed

to ſay. But, when I ſay that the members of CHRIST's viſible church, provided they are *faithful* members, are ſure of ſalvation by virtue of the Goſpel covenant, I do not ſay that thoſe who are not members of it are left without hope; or, to make uſe of your own words, "that ſalvation is withheld from them, merely becauſe they are Diſſenters." GOD forbid! Suppoſe a wayfaring man ſhould enquire of me reſpecting the road to the propoſed end of his journey, and I ſhould inform him that the broad road in which I was travelling led directly to it; but having a diſlike to travel in a beaten road, and a fancy to purſue bye-paths, that turned out of it to the right hand and to the left, ſuppoſe he ſhould aſk me a ſecond queſtion—whether either of thoſe bye-paths might not lead him to the ſame place? My anſwer would be, *poſſibly* they might; but if he would follow my advice, he would keep to the broad road in which I was travelling, becauſe that was a ſure road, it having been marked down by authority in the book of roads, for the expreſs direction of the traveller.

You ſay, Sir, that you "have read 'The Guide' with accurate attention." If ſo I muſt have written with great want of preciſion; for certain it is, that

the concluſion you have drawn from it is not more foreign to my ideas, than it is inconſiſtent with that charity which ought to mark the character of a Chriſtian miniſter. I embrace, therefore, the opportunity you have given me, of removing that falſe impreſſion, which appears to have been made upon your mind relative to the preſent ſubject, and through you, it is probable, upon that of others; truſting that thoſe perſons who have attended to your heavy charge, will alſo attend to my vindication.

"It was the general received perſuaſion of the ancient Chriſtian world," ſays HOOKER, "that '*Eccleſia eſt in Epiſcopo*,' the outward being of a church conſiſted in the having of a biſhop; inſomuch that they did not account it to be a church, which was not ſubject unto a biſhop." Upon this idea the writers of the church have proceeded in their judgment upon ſeparatiſts; conſidering them as ſeparated from that viſible ſociety, the church, to which, according to the Divine plan, they ought to be joined; and thereby deprived of the privileges annexed to a communion with it: and upon this idea alone does it appear to me, that any argument can be addreſſed to them on the ſubject. For unleſs there be a viſible church on earth, ſo diſtinguiſhed by its form and

government as to be known, of which it is required that all Chriſtians ſhould become members, what has been written upon the ſubject of church communion, from the days of the Apoſtles down to the preſent time, is but ſo much waſte paper. One chief object of my book was to point out the preciſe nature, deſign, and conſtitution, of this viſible church, that Chriſtian profeſſors might know what it was, and where to be found. Whilſt at the ſame time that I felt the moſt Chriſtian regard for thoſe who ſeparated from it, and refrained from all harſh judgment on their condition, I ſhould have betrayed the cauſe I had taken in hand, had I been induced, by what appears to me to be miſtaken charity, to make uſe of equivocal language, calculated to lead the reader to a falſe concluſion upon a ſubject of moſt important conſideration. As a miniſter of the church, it is my duty to ſpeak of it as it is: I cannot alter the nature or form of it, to accommodate it to the caſe of thoſe who are ſeparated from it. Firmly perſuaded, with HOOKER, (ſee book vii. page 376) that epiſcopacy is the primitive Apoſtolical inſtitution, I muſt conſider obedience to it to be a matter of Chriſtian obligation. Every endeavour, therefore, to perſuade my fellow-chriſtians to a conformity to that govern-

ment which appears eſſential to the promotion of the object which GOD may be ſuppoſed to have had in view at its original inſtitution, namely, that of preſerving the unity of the church in the bond of peace, appears to me to be one of the greateſt acts of charity a Chriſtian miniſter can perform. In correſpondence with this idea, conſidering the epiſcopal church as the only viſible church of CHRIST in this country, (the light, I believe, in which it is conſidered both in our liturgy, articles, and canons) it was my duty to repreſent all other ſocieties of Chriſtians but as ſo many ſeparations from it, which ought not, according to the Divine plan upon which the church was eſtabliſhed, ever to have taken place.

From what has been ſaid on this ſubject, you will perceive, I truſt, that there exiſts a wide difference in my mind between thoſe who are ſaid to be left to the *uncovenanted* mercies of GOD, and thoſe who are in a ſtate of abſolute condemnation; and that the concluſion drawn from my words is not that of the author of "*The Guide to the Church*," but a concluſion of your own; and conſequently that "thoſe rigid principles of eccleſiaſtical excision," which you ſay "preſent themſelves almoſt in every page of '*the Guide to the Church*," page 197, are principles which it has

been thought proper to affix to the character of the writer of that book; but which that writer, if he may be allowed the common privilege of all writers, that of explaining his own meaning, does by no means acknowledge.

Objections, indeed, may be made, even to demonſtrations. "*Nihil tam eſt bonum, quin dicendo malum effici poſſit.*" But while (as it has been already obſerved) I refrain with ST. PAUL from judging them that are without, leaving judgment to GOD, to whom all hearts are open, it muſt be deemed, I flatter myſelf, by all candid perſons, to be an act of *duty*, rather than of uncharitableneſs in a miniſter of CHRIST, to give directions to thoſe who ſtill continue members of the church, for the purpoſe of preſerving them from a needleſs and conſequently ſinful ſeparation from its communion.

It ſhall be allowed, for I am not one of thoſe who feel the leaſt unwillingneſs to tread back my ground, when I have reaſon to think I may have erred; it ſhall be allowed, I ſay, and I conſider myſelf obliged to you for giving me the opportunity ſo to do, that there may be a word to be met with here and there in my book, which, if ſtrictly taken, is calculated to convey a ſtronger idea to the minds of ſome people

than was meant to be conveyed on the occaſion. I will point out one inſtance. It is ſaid in page 175 of my book, that "The promiſes of the Goſpel are *excluſively* made to that one church." In the foregoing ſentence, I would crave leave to blot out the word *excluſively*, from a conſideration of the wrong concluſion that may be drawn from it. I ſee that the promiſes of the Goſpel are made to that univerſal church which CHRIST purchaſed with his blood, and of which "he is the Saviour;" Eph. v. 23: yet I do not feel myſelf authoriſed to ſay, that they are *excluſively* made to that church, becauſe I cannot pretend to determine how far thoſe who are not members of it are intereſted in them.

My idea upon this head is, perhaps, more liberal than you yourſelf will admit. For though poſſeſſed at all times of the ſame ideas reſpecting the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church, and that covenanted title to ſalvation acquired by a regular admiſſion into it, I have nevertheleſs always concluded, from the conſideration that the benefits of CHRIST's death are in ſome ſenſe co-extenſive with the effect of ADAM's fall, Rom. v. 18, that numbers will be ſaved through CHRIST who have never heard of his name. Dr. PALEY, ſpeaking of the heathens, ſays, "they will

be accepted together with thoſe who are inſtructed in the law, and obey it." Second Charge, page 17. "Moſt thinking men (ſays a learned Profeſſor) ſeem to allow, that *natural* virtue may meet with ſome rewards; and why may not the benefits of the Chriſtian ſacrifice of the Lamb, ſlain from the foundation of the world, extend in ſome degree to thoſe who lived virtuouſly *before* the incarnation of CHRIST?" HEY's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 392.

It is not ſaid that virtuous heathens will ſtand upon the ſame footing as Chriſtians, nor is it our buſineſs to determine what may be loſt in conſequence of their not having heard the Goſpel; but the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. v. 12, tells us, they will be judged; and if ſo, my concluſion is, that through the merits of CHRIST they will receive a reward proportionate to the diſpenſation under which they lived. But no argument drawn from the moral conduct of virtuous heathens can apply to Chriſtians acting upon heathen principles, becauſe they live under a different diſpenſation. The heathens walked, comparatively ſpeaking, in darkneſs. Upon Chriſtians the light hath ſhined: "they are expected to walk, therefore, as children of the light." Eph. v. 8.

Now though it ſhall be allowed that the foregoing ſubject is not ſo clearly ſtated in my book, and that objections may be made to ſome occaſional expreſſions, which *primâ facie* appear calculated to lead to an uncharitable concluſion; yet I cannot but flatter myſelf, that if due attention be paid to the general object which the writer had in view, and there be no diſpoſition in the reader to bring his argument into diſcredit by puſhing the concluſion further than it was meant to be carried, no additional explanation upon this head would be neceſſary. Indeed I muſt think, that if you, Sir, had only given yourſelf time to have read down the page immediately following that from which you have taken your quotation, your judgment, unleſs you adopted the reſolution of PILATE, "not to recall what you have once written," would have led you to an eraſure of your marginal comment.

My language in page 178 is this, and it is a language, which upon the moſt deliberate review of it I ſee no reaſon to alter: "Whoever, therefore, hopes to receive benefit from religious ſervices, muſt perform them according to GOD's will rather than *his own;* for let our religion be ever ſo right and good in our own eſtimation, it cannot on that account have any *covenanted* title to thoſe privileges and bleſſings, which

are, by Divine authority, annexed to the church of CHRIST. In this ſenſe the primitive fathers are to be underſtood, when they ſay that there is no ſalvation out of the holy Catholic church; by which is meant that there is no *covenanted* plan of ſalvation, ſave that which is addreſſed to man as a member of that church."

My judgment in the foregoing paſſage, if I underſtand myſelf, is confined to the *covenanted* plan of ſalvation in the church of CHRIST, to which I have annexed that certainty, which, upon the authority of ſacred writ, has ever been annexed to it. Thoſe who are out of the church are out of the covenant. What may be the conſequence of their being ſo, it is not my buſineſs to determine: and with reſpect to any plans ſet on foot by man for the attainment of ſalvation not conformable with that which has been revealed, I pronounce no judgment. My words (page 179) in immediate connexion with the foregoing paſſage are theſe; "The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our GOD." Deut. xix. 29. 'When therefore no knowledge has been vouchſafed, *no judgment ſhould be paſſed.* In all ſuch caſes every conſiderate man concludes, with faithful ABRAHAM, that 'the Judge of all the earth will do right."

Gen. xviii. 25. How far ſuch language juſtifies the concluſion you have drawn from it, ſhall now be left with the reader.

But, Sir, to take you upon your own ground. Allowing (according to the concluſion you have drawn from me in page 201 of your publication) that all thoſe who are out of the church are (to make uſe of your harſh language) "*to be damned by wholeſale*;" the uncharitableneſs of ſuch a doctrine, it ſhall be admitted, is a ſtrong argument againſt the truth of it. This argument will prove more, I think, than you would wiſh; for if the *uncharitableneſs* of my ſuppoſed doctrine is to be admitted as a ſufficient argument againſt it, what muſt become of yours, which pronounces damnation upon *the whole world*, a few choſen individuals alone excepted? When you have compared the great body of mankind that are actually living in communion with the epiſcopal church in the four different quarters of the globe; when you have conſidered the great extent of the Roman and Greek churches, together with that of the other proteſtant epiſcopal churches in Europe; and from thence have turned your eyes to Aſia, where it is ſuppoſed there are more Chriſtians of different denominations living in communion with the epiſcopal church, than are

perhaps in Europe, the greateſt part of the more famous Greek church being ſtill to be found in that quarter;* and when to theſe members of the epiſcopal church you add the great number of Chriſtians now called Cophtes, living under their patriarch in Africa; not to mention the epiſcopalians in America, who now form a very conſiderable body: when I ſay you have taken theſe circumſtances into conſideration, you will be able to judge which doctrine "deals out damnation by wholeſale;" the doctrine of "*The Guide to the Church*," which extends ſalvation to millions, or that which, comparatively ſpeaking, confines it to tens.

I have been thus particular on the foregoing ſubject, with the view of doing away that falſe impreſſion which your interpretation of my language is calculated to produce. At the ſame time I wiſh it to be underſtoood, that the poſition which really has been advanced in my book, relative to the importance of communion with the church, is ſtill meant to be maintained. What has been ſaid on that head muſt ſtill be ſaid; that the church of CHRIST holds forth

* "I have read," ſays LESLEY, ſpeaking of the members of the epiſcopal chnrch in Aſia, "of a Cardinal of Rome, who, giving an account of theſe, ſaid, there were greater numbers of one denomination there than in all the communion of Rome." LESLEY, Reh. 256.

to man the *only covenanted* plan of ſalvation. It is an unpopular doctrine, perhaps, and, from the preſent appearance of things, likely, it is feared, to become more ſo; but the miniſter of the church has nothing to do with popularity; his rule of judgment is not to be taken from this world; he is to ſpeak "as the oracles of GOD;" 1 PET. iv. 12. Should he feel himſelf inclined to withhold the truth, for fear of giving offence to thoſe who may have thought fit to depart from it, he had better at once relinquiſh his miniſterial office, than continue anſwerable for a charge which he has not reſolution to fulfil.

I proceed now, Sir, to the conſideration of your ſixth letter, ſo far, I ſtill wiſh to be underſtood, as it appears to concern myſelf; and though, I truſt, I am not actuated by narrow and ill-grounded prejudice, yet, I muſt confeſs, I feel that degree of intereſt in the ſubject of it, which to me appears ſuitable to its importance. You ſay ſomewhere in your book, that you are no voluntary ſchiſmatic; by which I underſtand is meant, you certainly would not be a ſchiſmatic, did you think that you really were one. It is not my buſineſs to determine this point; I chooſe rather that it ſhould be determined by yourſelf. But for this purpoſe it ſeems neceſſary that you ſhould attain a

more correct notion upon the ſubject of *ſchiſm* than, if I may judge from the letter before me, you at preſent poſſeſs. And though it may not be in my power to ſay any thing more deciſive on this ſubject, than has been already ſaid in my third diſcourſe; yet if I ſhould be ſo fortunate as either to hit on any new remark, or to place an old one in a more ſtriking point of view, as to afford you any additional ſatisfaction, I ſhall certainly think the time ſpent for the purpoſe well employed.

To proceed then with your letter; in page 153, you tell me that "you experience no ſmall difficulty in knowing where to find me. Sometimes you ſay, I am diſpleaſed at thoſe who do not make uſe of a form of prayer in their public aſſemblies; at others, I am diſſatisfied at thoſe who do; and extol the publican's prayer—'GOD be merciful to me a ſinner,' —above all forms."

I always feel a degree of concern when I remark any groſs miſrepreſentation of my book; becauſe, ſuch a circumſtance tends to place the reader of it in a point of view, in which I do not wiſh to ſee him. It being my deſire however to give you credit, Sir, for the beſt intentions, you will permit me, I truſt, to cheriſh the hope that the foregoing comment, ill-

founded and harſh as it is, originated rather in want of attention on your part, than in any want of conſiſtency on mine.

The object of my tenth diſcourſe was to point out the advantages attendant on a conſcientious communion with the church, together with the diſadvantages conſequent on a wilful ſeparation from it. One of the advantages of church communion, neceſſary to be inſiſted upon, was the uſe of an excellent liturgy, in oppoſition to the manifeſt diſadvantages attendant on an extemporary form of worſhip. After having taken up ſome pages in drawing a contraſt between theſe two different modes of worſhip, with the view of leaving a ſtrong impreſſion on the reader's mind in favour of the eſtabliſhed church, and pointed out to him what ſober Chriſtians underſtood by the *ſpirit of prayer*, in oppoſition to the wild idea of ſome enthuſiaſts on that ſubject; I purpoſely threw in a hint to prevent the abuſe of an eſtabliſhed form, by taking occaſion to remind the Chriſtian of that *ſpirit* of devotion, which can alone render a religious ſervice, of what kind ſoever, acceptable to the DEITY. "The *ſpirit* of devotion, (I ſay) which gave acceptance at the Throne of Grace to the ſimple prayer of the publican, and without which the moſt perfect

compoſition is but a collection of vain words, offenſive to the Being to whom it is addreſſed, is a mixture of humiliation and gratitude, derived from the conſideration of our vileneſs and wretchedneſs on the one hand, and the contemplation of infinite goodneſs and aſtoniſhing loving-kindneſs on the other. Whoever prays in this diſpoſition of ſoul, moſt certainly prays by the ſpirit; becauſe this diſpoſition is not natural, but the effect of that Divine influence, which is graciouſly employed for the purpoſe of bringing fallen man back to his Maker."

If, Sir, you will take the trouble to read over again ſome few pages preceding the one from which the above extract is taken, I flatter myſelf you will be at no difficulty in aſcertaining the preciſe object I had in view in writing them.

You proceed to point out to me ſeveral gentlemen, of whoſe profeſſional abilities you have formed ſo high an opinion, that you think "it is much to be lamented on my own account," that I do not ſuffer myſelf to reap the benefit of their miniſtry. I am very ſenſible that I might reap benefit from the abilities of many men, to whoſe ſuperior attainments I look up. I am only ſorry in this caſe, that you have not found a tutor for me *in* the church of England;

becauſe having learnt that we muſt not do evil that good may come, I cannot think that the advantages to be obtained by my attendance upon Mr. JAY's miniſtry, how well qualified ſoever he may be, will compenſate for the ſin I ſhould commit in becoming a member of a *ſchiſmatic congregation*. Permit me, Sir, as I paſs on to ſubmit it to your conſideration, both as a member of the church and of ST. STEPHEN's chapel, whether more advantage would not be derived to the community in a civil as well religious light, if, inſtead of ſending the clergy to ſchool to teachers of independent meeting-houſes, you would prevail upon thoſe teachers to heal the ſchiſm they make, by attending on the miniſtry of the church.

You are ſo kind to encourage me to put myſelf in the way of what appears to be ſo deſirable an advantage, by holding out to me the example of ſeveral of my "worthy and liberal-minded brethren in the miniſtry, and thoſe of no inferior rank, who occaſionally frequent Mr. JAY's chapel." Page 156.

There is nothing by which we are more eaſily and more generally impoſed upon, than by the miſapplication of words. *Liberal-mindedneſs*, in the true definition of it, applies to a man who poſſeſſes no mean, low, and ungentleman-like notions; whoſe

conduct is not governed by narrow, ſelfiſh, ill-grounded prejudices. But, when it is applied to miniſters of the church, in conſequence of their acting in direct violation of canonical obedience, it is ſuch a proſtitution of the term, as cannot be too carefully guarded againſt. By canonical obedience, to which every miniſter of the church is bound, is meant, as I underſtand the term, obedience to our ſpiritual governors, according to the canons made and eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe. As you ſeem to be converſant with the canons, and conſider them of authority, I have only to point out to your attention the ninth, tenth, and eleventh; in which you find, that the congregations of thoſe who ſeparate from the communion of the church of England are not deemed true and lawful churches; and that the members of them, as *ſchiſmatics*, are liable to eccleſiaſtical cenſure. The Act of Toleration has not ſet aſide the force of theſe canons, ſo far as they apply to the miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church: *for them* they were originally made, and *to them* they ſtill continue a rule of obedience. Thoſe who have ſeparated from the church ſtand upon a different footing. The law of the land, under certain circumſtances, protects them in their ſeparation. But the miniſters of the church of Eng-

land have another law, by which their conduct in ſpiritual matters is to be regulated. And can you think that they act in character, or in conformity to that obedience which is due to the eccleſiaſtical government under which they profeſs to miniſter, to encourage by their example the violation of thoſe canons, which, to them at leaſt, ought in all poſſible things to be a ſtandard for their conduct? I truſt, Sir, I ſhall not lower myſelf in your eſtimation, when I tell you, that I am not one of thoſe clergy who appear to put off their profeſſion with their gown; who, after praying againſt ſchiſm in the morning, countenance it by their attendance at a place of diſſenting worſhip in the afternoon. If to ſit looſe in our obedience to eccleſiaſtical conſtitutions give a title to the character of being a *liberal-minded* man; then were the raſh and daring men of the laſt century, who, from their diſlike to eccleſiaſtical ſubordination in particular, and to all conſtituted authority in general, in their mad career of reformation totally overturned both church and ſtate, *liberal-minded* to a degree; with which, I truſt, none of their ſucceſſors will ever attempt to vie.

You go on to ſay, that "whilſt Mr. JAY manifeſts a ſpirit of love towards the eſtabliſhed clergy,

why ſhould they not in their turn give to him and to others of their diſſenting brethren that right hand of fellowſhip, in which the *true unity* of the church conſiſts?"* The object I had in view in my book was to aſcertain the nature and conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, and to point out the advantages and diſadvantages conſequent on a communion with, and ſeparation from it; but not to enter into an analyſis of the conduct or motives of the ſeparating parties. On this account I could wiſh that Mr. JAY's name had not been introduced; for the cauſe of ſeparation is the ſame, whoever may be the party that eſpouſes it. I am not ſpeaking of the *man*, but of the *principle*: and "wiſe people ſhould conſider, that whatever examples there may have been of piety, learning, wit, or wiſdom, joined with ſchiſm, they can never prove that ſchiſm is no ſin: no man can be taken as an authority againſt the laws of GOD, and the great law of charity is ſupreme over all." Letter to the Church of England, page 14.

* A Gentleman of my acquaintance gave this reaſon to one of Mr. JAY's admirers, for diſcontinuing his attendance at his chapel; becauſe, in conſequence of that preacher's uncharitable railing againſt the biſhops and clergy, he could not conſider him to be a miniſter of the Goſpel of peace.

But when you ſay that the *true unity* of the church conſiſts in the eſtabliſhed clergy attending the aſſemblies of their diſſenting brethren, who have broken away from the viſible church in this country, and eſtabliſhed a Chriſtian ſociety independent of it; you ſay in other words, that ſeparation from the church is the way to promote communion with it: to which, when you have proved that union and diſunion mean the ſame thing, and are calculated to miniſter to the ſame end, you may challenge my aſſent.

Your next ſentence about *eſſentials* and *fundamentals* is a repetition of your friend Mr. WILBERFORCE's language; to which a ſufficient anſwer has been already given. I would only obſerve, that the proof brought from Biſhop BURNET was not meant to apply to the ſubject you are upon. The object he chiefly had before him, in his comment on the Nineteenth Article, was to prove, in oppoſition to the ſuppoſed infallibility and uſurped ſupremacy of the church of Rome, which had engroſſed to itſelf the title of Catholic church, that the church of England, as preſerving the eſſentials and fundamentals of Chriſtianity, was alſo a *true church*. Now it is preſumed, a biſhop of the church muſt conſider the *conſtitution* of it as eſtabliſhed by CHRIST, or by his Apoſtles

from ſpiritual direction, as among the *eſſentials* of Chriſtianity, becauſe without it the pure doctrine would not long be preſerved in the world; and therefore BURNET could not mean that his deſcription of a church ſhould have that extenſive application which you appear to have affixed to it, by giving the title of churches to the congregations of ſectariſts of every denomination. For if ſuch was the Biſhop's meaning, he wrote againſt the eſtabliſhed doctrine of the church, of which he was an appointed governor, and muſt ſtand condemned by the language of both articles and canons. Had the Biſhop foreſeen that ſuch an uſe would have been made of his comment, as to juſtify ſeparation from the *viſible church* of CHRIST in this country, and thereby introduce that wild notion of church unity, which you have attempted to graft upon it, we muſt do him the juſtice to ſuppoſe, that he would have guarded againſt it.

To rectify your notion concerning the Divine grace of Chriſtian charity, which you apply to perſons who are acting in direct contradiction to it, I take leave to recommend to your attention the thirteenth chapter of ST. PAUL'S firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians; which was expreſsly addreſſed to the conſideration of the ſchiſmatics, then ariſing in the church of Corinth.

In the preceding chapter, the Apoſtle had been arguing from the connexion and unity prevailing among the members of the natural body, whereby the general welfare of the body was promoted, to the neceſſity of a ſimilar connexion and unity among the members of the ſpiritual body, the church. And that the Corinthians might not miſtake his meaning, he directs their attention to the immediate object he had in view, in the figurative alluſion made uſe of on the occaſion; by telling them plainly, in the twenty-ſeventh verſe, that *they* were the *body of* CHRIST, and members in particular. At the time the Apoſtle wrote this Epiſtle, there was a ſchiſm in the church of Corinth. Some men, proud of the diſtinction to which they thought themſelves entitled by the ſuperiority of their gifts, had broken away from the order and unity of the Apoſtolic church. With a view to reſtrain theſe men from this ſelf-ſufficient practice, which the Apoſtle foreſaw would ultimately tend to the ruin of the church, he tells them plainly in the thirteenth chapter, that though poſſeſſed of all the gifts that could be mentioned, yet, if thoſe gifts led to the breaking the unity of the church, by dividing them into ſeparate congregations independent of each other, they would profit them nothing: for

the great Chriſtian law of charity, "which envieth not, which vaunteth not itſelf, which is not puffed up, which ſeeketh not her own, is not eaſily provoked, which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," would, in a word, conſtrain them, as members of the Chriſtian church, to do any thing, to bear any thing, to give up any thing, rather than that the peace and unity of it ſhould be broken.

Such is the meaning of this moſt ſtriking chapter; in which the Apoſtle ſeems to have exerted all his powers of eloquence, in order to promote that moſt eſſential characteriſtic of Chriſtianity, the love of the brethren, which your mode of writing upon this occaſion appears calculated to deſtroy. The Apoſtle thought that all diviſion among Chriſtians was to be ſedulouſly avoided; that Chriſtian charity, the conſequence of Chriſtian unity, might be preſerved. You think that it ſignifies nothing into what ſeparate ſocieties Chriſtians are divided; "provided they agree in eſſentials and fundamentals, each ſeparating party may adorn and exerciſe the divine grace of Chriſtian charity in their own ſphere." St. Paul, therefore, entertained ſentiments on this ſubject directly oppoſite to thoſe which you ſeem to entertain

upon it. He thought that diviſion among Chriſtians led to a breach of charity; and for that reaſon he exerted himſelf ſo much to prevent it. You think that the bond of charity may be preſerved among Chriſtians, who, in ST. PAUL's judgment, take the moſt certain way to break it, provided there is agreement in *eſſentials* and *fundamentals*; which in your language means, provided they are all ſound Calviniſts, it matters not into how many different ſects Chriſtians are broken. Members of the Chriſtian church, and thoſe who have ſeparated from it, may all meet together, and live in Chriſtian communion with each other; *epiſcopacy*, *preſbytery*, *independency*—either, or neither, or all three, it is all one. To talk about the unity of the Chriſtian church, and the ſin of ſchiſm, in the ſenſe in which ST. PAUL talked of theſe ſubjects, and with the expreſs view of preſerving the peace of the church, is in your idea "to do an eſſential injury to the church of England, by holding her up as of an intolerant ſpirit." Page 20. "It is to attempt to break and diſturb her peace." Page 157.

You would tell us probably, in the language of Dr. EDWARDS, a rigid Calviniſt in the beginning of the laſt century, with whoſe writings I ſhould judge you

to be perfectly well acquainted, that "it is high time to learn ſobriety, and to be ſenſible of the ſufficient miſchief that has lurked under the pretence of advancing the unity of the church;"* and that, if we would attain to the character of being liberal-minded men, we muſt give up all church ideas, which have been derived from Apoſtolic precept and primitive practice; and accommodate ourſelves to the preſent popular notions upon that ſubject. In order to promote what you are pleaſed to call the *true unity of the church*, the eſtabliſhed clergy muſt go to the meeting-houſe; they muſt lay aſide all prejudices about the neceſſity of regular ordination and church communion; the wall of the LORD's vineyard muſt be thrown down, that Chriſtians may walk in and out, backward and forward, at their will; and then, Sir, in your judgment, the eſtabliſhed harmony of what you are pleaſed to call the churches of our bleſſed LORD's vineyard will be complete, and the attempt of every honeſt guide to lead the members of CHRIST's church in the old paths will be vain.

But though the world may go after you, and though a divine of the old ſtamp, in theſe days of

* Dr. EDWARDS', of Cambridge, ſermon on the 1ſt of May, 1707.

unparalleled liberality, (and thence it may be too truly added, of unparalleled danger) muſt not expect to be popular; yet, Sir, I have made up my mind on this ſubject, being perfectly ſatisfied not to be more liberal-minded reſpecting it than ST. PAUL was.

Much more might be ſaid upon this important ſubject; but as I ſhall have occaſion to touch upon it again in the courſe of this letter, I for the preſent paſs on.

You ſay, Sir, in page 154, that "you muſt praiſe Mr. GREEN, for keeping as cloſe to the church as he can, by reading her excellent ſervice; eſpecially as he does not in ſentiment differ from her a tittle; ſo that he certainly is a much more faithful ſon of the eſtabliſhment than one who extolls its conſtitution, but undermines its plain doctrine." Your meaning, Sir, is perfectly intelligible; but as it is my wiſh to paſs over, as much as may be, all perſonal attacks or inſinuations, I have only to reply to what you have above advanced, in the words of the Apoſtle, that with me "it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged in this caſe of you or of man's judgment. He that judgeth me is the Lord." 1 Cor. iv. 3.

According to the Nineteenth Article you ſay, "that is a church where there is a congregation of faithful men, and where the pure word of GOD is

preached." There is a very convenient way of quoting adopted by ſome people, which conſiſts in taking juſt as much of a paſſage as ſuits their purpoſe, and in leaving the reſt. Such appears to be the caſe at preſent. You wiſh to make it appear, that every congregation of Chriſtian people, where the pure word of GOD is preached, conſtitutes a church. To ſubſtantiate this point, you bring the authority of the Nineteenth Article, which, according to your partial manner of quoting, is calculated to lead the reader to the deſired concluſion. The words of the Article in queſtion are theſe: "The *viſible* church of CHRIST is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of GOD is preached, and the ſacraments be *duly* adminiſtered according to CHRIST's ordinance." The pure word of GOD then muſt not only be preached, but the ſacraments muſt alſo be *duly* adminiſtered according to CHRIST's ordinance, to warrant the application of the term *viſible church* of CHRIST to any congregation of Chriſtian people. Now the Twenty-third Article of the Church ſays, that it is not lawful for any man to take upon himſelf the office of miniſtering the ſacraments, before he be *lawfully* called, and ſent to execute the ſame, by thoſe who have public authority;

given unto them to call and ſend miniſters into the LORD's vineyard. But, according to the doctrine of the church of England, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member, and to one of whoſe articles you appeal on this ſubject, thoſe perſons only have authority to ſend miniſters into the LORD's vineyard, who are the appointed governors of it, according to that eccleſiaſtical conſtitution which was ſettled by the Apoſtles. It follows, therefore, from theſe premiſes, upon the authority of our articles, that in whatever Chriſtian congregation miniſters *duly* qualified to adminiſter the ſacraments are wanting, there the *viſible church* cannot exiſt. You proceed to ſay, that "where the pure word is not preached, we are by natural conſequence warranted to declare, that no true church exiſts; and in that caſe, the parochial temple becomes a conventicle, and the miniſter of the church a ſchiſmatic." Page 154.

You will excuſe me, Sir, if I do not ſee any natural conſequence in this caſe; but, on the contrary, a very dangerous conſequence that may be drawn from ſuch a poſition. I mean neither to diſparage or offend you, when I take upon me to aſſert, that you are but a ſcioliſt in theology, if you are yet to learn, that, however bold the poſition may ſeem,

that may be a *true church*, in which the pure word of GOD is not preached. The diſtinctive title *true church* in this caſe muſt be underſtood as referring ſimply to the *regularity of its conſtitution*, abſtracted from the corruption with which the poſſeſſion of that conſtitution may be accompanied; and, thus underſtood, the expreſſion is to be juſtified. For in this ſenſe that may be *conſtitutionally* true, which is at the ſame time *practically* falſe. That may, for inſtance, be a *true church*, ſo far as the form of its conſtitution is concerned, in which the pure word of GOD is not preached. Under ſuch circumſtances, it is, indeed, a church in error; and conſequently, ſo far as that error prevails, not what it ought to be. But error in a church does not deſtroy its conſtitution. Error may be reformed, and the church thereby reſtored to perfection. If you will turn to the Revelations, you will find the churches of Aſia were accuſed of groſs errors, but their candleſtick was not removed; that is, they did not ceaſe to be churches, till their errors were found to be incorrigible. The church of Rome, as I have before obſerved from great authority, is a *true church*, though a church in which the pure word is not always preached. As ſuch, it is a *corrupt* church; but is ſtill ſuffered to exiſt, as a very

conſpicuous branch of the viſible church of CHRIST. When a church ſhall have arrived to that extreme ſtate of corruption, as no longer to be entitled to the diſtinction of being a church, it is GOD's buſineſs to determine, not ours; and when this has been determined, the event will prove. At the ſame time it muſt be ſaid, that the reader muſt poſſeſs little claim to diſcrimination of judgment on this ſubject, who does not clearly diſtinguiſh between the conſtitution of the church, as a ſociety Divinely inſtituted, and the corruptions to which ſuch conſtitution may at times be made ſubſervient.

Indeed if man be to take upon himſelf to determine when error in a church ſhall take away from it its diſtinctive character, the remedy in this caſe will prove worſe than the diſeaſe. However much to be deprecated error is in any caſe, yet error *in* the church is not ſo bad as error *out* of it; for it is under ſome reſtraint, and on that account not likely to be carried to ſuch an extent as when men are left to their own imaginations. But you have found out a ſhort way of ſettling this matter. You ſay where the pure word of GOD is preached, there is the *true* church; and where that word is not preached, there is no *true* church. Now as many parts of your publication are ex-

preſsly calculated to give the reader to underſtand that the pure word of GOD is preached *out* of the church but not *in* it, the concluſion follows, in your words, that the church becomes the conventicle, and the conventicle the church. To ſhew the weakneſs as well as danger of ſuch kind of looſe argument, eſpecially when it finds its way into the heads of common people, permit me to apply it to another ſubject.

The Houſe of Commons is conſidered, if I may ſo ſay, as the conſtitutional mouth-piece of the people; when through corruption the voice of the people is not fairly heard, there can be no true Houſe of Commons. Where the voice of the people is fairly heard, as may be ſaid to be the caſe, when a conventional mob is aſſembled under their factious leaders, there the *true* Houſe of Commons exiſts. In ſuch caſe the conventional mob is to be looked up to as the *true* Houſe of Commons, and the Houſe of Commons is degraded into an irregular and unlawful meeting. And the conſequences which are likely to follow from ſuch a mode of reaſoning, will, I am perſuaded, be nearly the ſame, whether applied to church or ſtate; under the plauſible idea of reformation, they will tend to the deſtruction of the conſtitution in both.

I perfectly agree with you, Sir, with reſpect to the neceſſity of the pure word of GOD being preached in the church. The church was eſtabliſhed for that very purpoſe; and it muſt be the wiſh of every ſincere Chriſtian, that ſuch purpoſe may be moſt effectually anſwered. But I am not to take every man's word with reſpect to the pure doctrine being not preached in the church, no more than I ought to form a judgment of the corruption of the Houſe of Commons from the declaration of every noiſy demagogue. The church and the Houſe of Commons are two parts of our conſtitution. It is not for me, as a good ſubject, to form a raſh and haſty judgment of either; much leſs to conclude, that error in the one or corruption in the other juſtifies me in attempting their deſtruction. Whilſt men are what they are, there will be a portion of error in the church, as well as of corruption in the ſtate; and if we have taken up the Utopian idea that nothing ſhall be eſtabliſhed that does not promiſe abſolute perfection, we ſhall have nothing ſettled among us to the end of time.

But before I quit this point, let us conſider a moment. You give us to underſtand, that the pure word of GOD is not preached in the church. Now this is either a matter of fact or matter of opinion.

If it be a matter of fact, let it in GOD's name be rectified. If it be only a matter of opinion, it ought to be proved. You conſider the Calviniſtic doctrine to be the pure word of GOD. The Calviniſtic doctrine, it will be admitted, is not preached in the church, and ſeeing that doctrine as I ſee it, I truſt it never will. But when you ſay, that where the *Calviniſtic doctrine* is not preached, the *pure word* of GOD is not preached, this I conceive to be begging the queſtion. When you have proved *from ſcripture* that the Calviniſtic doctrine is the pure word of GOD, I ſhall think myſelf bound to ſubſcribe to it, and with your Biſhop BABINGTON ſhall conſider it to be "the duty of all faithful miniſters to preach it to the people, as part of the counſel of GOD." But for this purpoſe you muſt be ſatisfied that ſomething more is neceſſary than naked unſupported aſſertion.

I am not at all ſurpriſed to find that a perſon who has formed ſo imperfect an idea of the nature and conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, ſhould appear to be a perfect ſtranger to the office and character of the Chriſtian prieſthood. Provided the liturgy of the church of England be read, and the ſacraments are adminiſtered, it ſeems to be a matter of no conſideration with you, where or by whom theſe ſervices are

performed. It may be proper therefore to remind you, that the words of the liturgy do not conſtitute the ſervice of the church; nor does the form of breaking bread and pouring out wine, and diſtributing them to an attendant congregation, make it a ſacrament of our church. The complete ſervice of the church of England can be performed no where without a *prieſt*. The prayers may be read indeed by any one, and the ſacraments adminiſtered by any perſon acquainted with the form; but this is not the ſervice of the church of England, but a proſtitution of it; becauſe, according to the doctrine of our church, no one but a prieſt has received authority to pronounce abſolution, to bleſs the people in GOD's name, and to offer up to GOD the ſacrifice of the altar. It is neceſſary only to conſult the rubric, to be ſatisfied on theſe points. "It is the office of a prieſt (ſays ST. AMBROSE) to ſtand between GOD and the people, and to pray unto him for the forgiveneſs of their ſins, which CHRIST did, who ever lives to make interceſſion for us, when he offered himſelf upon the croſs."* ST. PAUL tells you, (Heb. xiii. 13) that "we have an altar in the

* Pontificis officium eſt inter DEUM ſtare et populum, et DEUM precari pro populi delictis. Hoc enim CHRISTUS fecit, ſeipſum offerens pro precatis noſtris, ſemper vivens ad interpellandum pro nobis. Ep. ad Heb. c. 5.

Chriſtian church." If ſo, we muſt have a *ſacrifice* and a *prieſt*, for theſe are correlative terms. In conformity with this eſtabliſhed idea, the primitive writers often called the LORD's table an altar, and the holy euchariſt an altar offering, before it became the LORD's ſupper; and the holy table, like the altar at Jeruſalem, they conſidered to be uſed as an altar for ſacrifice, before it was employed as a table for a ſacrificial feaſt; the holy elements being conſecrated and offered up as a commemorative ſacrifice, in which is repreſented before GOD the ſacrifice of CHRIST upon the croſs, in conſequence of which ſolemn office of the prieſt they become the body and blood of CHRIST in ſpirit and effect to all faithful receivers. It follows then, unleſs the church has been under a great miſtake upon this ſubject from its firſt eſtabliſhment to the preſent time, that where there is *no prieſt*, there can be *no ſacrifice*, and where there is *no ſacrifice*, there can be *no receiving* of the body and blood of CHRIST; for the elements muſt be firſt made the body and blood by conſecration, before they can be received as ſuch by the congregation. "And who (ſays the learned HICKES) but a prieſt can receive the elements from the people, and offer up to GOD ſuch ſolemn prayers and thankſgivings for the con-

gregation, and make ſuch ſolemn interceſſion for them as are now and ever were offered and made in this holy ſacrament? Who but a prieſt can conſecrate the elements by ſolemn prayer, and make them the myſtical body and blood of CHRIST? Who but a prieſt can ſtand in GOD's ſtead and at his table, and in his name receive his gueſts? Who but a prieſt hath power to break the bread and bleſs the cup, and make a ſolemn memorial before GOD of his ſufferings, and then deliver his ſacramental body and blood to the faithful communicants, as tokens of his meritorious ſufferings, and pledges of their ſalvation? A man thus authoriſed to act for man in things pertaining to GOD, and for GOD in things pertaining to men, muſt be a prieſt; and ſuch holy miniſtrations muſt be ſacerdotal, whether the holy table be an altar, and the ſacrament a ſacrifice or not."* HICKES's Chriſtian Prieſthood, page 35.

It may be neceſſary perhaps, as you have thought it proper to give me credit for at leaſt a tincture of Popery, to add a ſhort obſervation or two by way of guarding againſt a haſty concluſion. To prevent

* The obſervation which has been here applied to the ſacrament of the LORD's-Supper, relative to the authority of the party who adminiſters it, applies, *mutatis mutandis*, with equal force to the Sacrament of Baptiſm.

therefore your being frightened at the words *altar*, *prieſt*, and *ſacrifice*, and fancying that I am leading you back into the Roman church, I muſt remind you, that theſe words were univerſally uſed in the primitive church, long before the Popiſh corruption was ever thought of; and were always conſidered as words that conveyed the moſt high and important ſignification. The firſt Chriſtians had no idea of the holy euchariſt being a proper propitiating ſacrifice, in which the body and blood of CHRIST in truth, reality, and ſubſtance are offered up; the idea which gave riſe to the idolatry practiſed in the modern church of Rome on this ſubject: but they conſidered it to be a *commemorative* ſacrifice and *typical repreſentation*, by way of memorial of the grand ſacrifice that had been offered up on the croſs by JESUS CHRIST; an idea which perfectly ſecures the poſſeſſors of it from the groſs corruption of the church of Rome; becauſe the *commemoration* of a fact cannot be the *fact itſelf*; the repreſentation cannot be the thing deſigned to be repreſented; the ſign cannot be the reality, which it is meant to ſignify.

Such is the idea which our church entertains upon this ſubject. She conſiders the ſacrament of the LORD'S-Supper to be a feaſt upon a ſacrifice; to con-

ſtitute it ſuch, that which is feaſted upon muſt have been firſt made a ſacrifice by having been offered up by a prieſt. Such is the idea which the Scotch epiſcopal church has upon this ſacred ſubject, which, by forming her communion ſervice upon the model of that ſet forth for the uſe of the church of England in the reign of EDWARD VI., ſtill keeps cloſer to the original pattern of the primitive church, in the celebration of thisſervice, than the church of England now does.

When the diſſenters of this country, inſtead of remaining ſatisfied with having ſeparated from the corrupt church of Rome, thought it neceſſary moreover to ſeparate from the prieſthood of the church of England, they found themſelves under the neceſſity of doing as well as they could without it. Inſtead therefore of joining with their fellow-Chriſtians in partaking of a feaſt upon a ſacrifice which they could not have, they ſat themſelves down, under the idea of partaking of the LORD'S-Supper, to eat and drink bread and wine in memory of a departed friend. An idea, which I am ſorry to ſay, has received ſome countenance even from divines of our church; who, by lowering the dignity of this ſolemn ſervice, have been thereby inſtrumental in putting its true nature ſo much out of ſight, that there are but few mem-

bers of it poſſeſſed of a proper notion upon this important ſubject.

If this digreſſion may have tended to impreſs upon your mind the eſſential difference between the office of thoſe who ſend themſelves into the miniſtry, and that of perſons ſent and appointed by proper authority to miniſter between GOD and the people, I ſhall think my time not thrown away. Permit me only to obſerve, that the way to bring the clergy up to the proper ſtandard, an object which every Chriſtian muſt have at heart, is by placing the dignity of their office before them, not by ſeeking to degrade it. Teach them to reſpect themſelves, and they will be reſpected.

True, you ſay; were the prieſts what they ought to be, they would not fail to be reſpected. Alas! Sir, when I read ST. CHRYSOSTOM, and conſider what a prieſt ought to be, it is not poſſible for you to look more down upon me, than I look down upon myſelf. I do not attempt to deny your charge, I only recommend judgment in the proſecution of it. It ſhall be allowed, that from the crown of the head to the ſole of the foot there is but little ſoundneſs to be found. Still the patient ſhould not be given over. But emollients and proper regimen ſeem better calculated to effect a cure, than cauſtics and

irritation. To render the clergy vile in the eyes of the people, by giving them to underſtand that the plan of the Goſpel diſpenſation can be carried on in the world without a prieſthood as well as with it, is not, in my opinion, the way to reform a corrupted church, but to leave us without any church at all. "As long as the people are taught the true nature of the Chriſtian miniſtry to be, as really it is, a true and proper prieſthood, and that their miniſters are true and proper prieſts, ordained by GOD to ſtand before Him as advocates for them, and before them for Him as his oracles to bleſs them in his name, ſo long they will honour and reverence them as prieſts; but when they are pleaſed to ſtrip themſelves of that part of their character and relation to GOD to which thoſe powers belong, and which above any other makes their miniſtry, and them as church miniſters, venerable and holy, then they will ſoon find the veneration of the people begin to decay, and by degrees wear off into utter contempt; when they have once laid aſide the notion of their being orators and advocates ordained by GOD to intercede with Him for them, which, Sir, their flocks can no longer retain than they believe them to be proper prieſts."*

* HICKES's Chriſtian Prieſthood, page 130.

I now proceed.

What you ſay, page 157 and 158, about *ſchiſmatics*, I paſs over; becauſe it is my deſign to bring that ſubject into one point of view at the concluſion of this letter.

To your deſcription of me, page 158, "*as an high-flying Arminian, grafted upon the ſtock of a Papiſt*," I ſay nothing; becauſe I conſider it to be one of the haſty droppings of a pen accuſtomed to outrun the judgment of the writer.

What is ſaid, page 159, of thoſe Chriſtians who avail themſelves of the law of toleration, and build a chapel where the church ſervice is performed, "becauſe they will not become diſſenters, not from a deſire to leave the church, but becauſe (as you are pleaſed to ſay) the church has left them," page 161, will come under future conſideration.

There remains then only one paſſage, in page 161, which appears to demand notice. You ſeem to complain, that thoſe whom I harſhly call ſchiſmatics without knowing it, "are cenſured and *perſecuted*." I was not aware, Sir, that to point out to Chriſtians who might moſt probably be ignorant of it, the ſin of ſeparating from the communion of the church, could

poſſibly be called *perſecution.* Cenſure, indeed, it may be; but it is the cenſure of charity ariſing from a ſincere regard for the ſpiritual welfare of the parties concerned: and where the things which properly fall under the notice of the Chriſtian miniſter are open to cenſure, I conceive he would partially diſcharge his duty who witheld it. When honeſt old LATIMER put a Bible into the hands of his licentious ſovereign, with a page doubled down at the text, which ſays, "Whoremongers and adulterers GOD ſhall judge," he did not, I preſume, conſider himſelf as a perſecutor, but as a diſciple of ST. PAUL, who had directed him, in the perſons of TIMOTHY and TITUS, "to reprove and rebuke with all authority." 2 TIM. iv. 2.; 2 TIT. 15. "Tenderneſs to ſchiſm may be a fine thing, and paſs for true piety ſo long as men ſhall judge one another; but when GOD ſhall judge us all, it muſt give an account of itſelf to Him who is no reſpecter of perſons." Letter to the Church of England, p. 15.

If ſchiſm be a grievous ſin, (and if it be not, the church has been in an error from the beginning, and our liturgy ſhould be altered) he who conſiders the ſolemn charge delivered to the watchman of Iſrael, in the ſecond chapter of EZEKIEL, will not riſk his own

ſalvation for the ſake of ſpeaking ſmooth things to his brethren.

I have taken the liberty to make ſome alteration in your extract from COWPER, not with a view to improve the poetry, but to adapt it to my ſubject, with which I conclude my remarks upon your ſixth letter:

" Hence jarring ſectaries may learn
" Their real intereſt to diſcern,
" That brother ſhould not war with brother,
" And worry and devour each other."
Shunning diviſion here below,
That each in charity may grow,
Till join'd by Chriſtian fellowſhip and love,
The church on earth ſhall meet the church above.

I proceed now, Sir, by way of appendix to this letter, to bring the ſubject of church communion and ſchiſm into one collected point of view, that I may, if poſſible, leave a more conſiſtent idea upon your mind than you at preſent appear to poſſeſs upon it. After what was ſaid on this ſubject in my book, I had flattered myſelf that no addition to it had been neceſſary. The nature and conſtitution of the Chriſtian church having been clearly pointed out, the reader, it was preſumed, could be at no loſs to know where to find it: for a *viſible* ſociety, under a regular and publicly appointed government, is not a thing that can be hid in a corner. Having found the church,

the reader muſt ſtill be leſs at a loſs to know what was meant by *ſchiſm*, or unwarrantable ſeparation from it; becauſe he muſt know the difference between being a member of a certain viſible ſociety, and not being a member of it. The confuſion which has generally been introduced into this ſubject, has chiefly ariſen from an attempt to argue from falſe premiſes, by a ſubſtitution of the *inviſible* for the *viſible* church; by exchanging a ſociety, of which, from its outward and viſible form of government, we are enabled to form a judgment, for that of which, from its inviſible nature, we can form little or no judgment at all. To ſuch a confuſion, I am inclined to think, your imperfect ideas upon this ſubject may be attributed. Moſt of the quotations you have brought forward, if I miſtake not, apply to the *inviſible* church; and therefore do not immediately belong to the matter in hand.

The "*Guide to the Church*" profeſſed to treat (not of that ſociety which is inviſible, and know only to GOD, but) of that which has been made known to man, for the purpoſe of his being a member, and as ſuch, being governed by the rules of it; not about an idea to which we are incapable of giving form or ſubſtance, but about *an actual reality* exiſting in a ſettled form before our eyes, and for an attention to which,

as a Divine inſtitution, all Chriſtians muſt one day be accountable.

For Chriſtians to diſcriminate, therefore, in this caſe, ſeems eſſential not only to their acquiring a proper notion of the Chriſtian church; but, what is of ſtill greater importance, to their diſcharging their duty toward it. Should it pleaſe GOD, that in theſe days of general ignorance in church matters, I may prove in any degree inſtrumental in promoting ſo deſired an object, I ſhould think I had not altogether lived in vain. To heal diviſions in a church, and diſpleaſe none that make them, are two ſuch works of charity as can ſcarce conſiſt together. I could wiſh if it were poſſible to effect both; for my hearty deſire to GOD for my brethren is, that they may be ſaved: at the ſame time I feel conſcious of a diſpoſition to think charitably, and to give offence to no man. Should therefore our ſentiments upon the enſuing ſubject not coincide, allow me to hope, that you will not ſuffer yourſelf to run away with ſuch ideas as are connected with *Pope, Cardinal, eccleſiaſtical exciſion, or wholeſale damnation*, ideas which appeared to haunt you at the time you were writing your book; for, if you will take the trouble to examine the ſources from whence I have drawn my

information, you will be abundantly convinced, that the doctrine delivered by me on the preſent ſubject is of a much older date than Popery.

The unity of the Chriſtian church was the doctrine of JESUS CHRIST: it was conſequently the doctrine of his Apoſtles; and was moreover the uniform doctrine of the church for 1500 years. As I bear you record, that you have a zeal for GOD, I have therefore only to beſeech you, in the language of ST. PAUL, "to hear me patiently." Acts xxvi. 3.

It will be allowed on all hands, that a church, or eccleſiaſtical ſociety, the members of which are united to GOD and to one another, by a Divine covenant, has been formed in the world: and it will, it is preſumed, be as generally allowed, that GOD only can make or conſtitute a church. The church ſo conſtituted is called by the Apoſtle the body of CHRIST, and Chriſtians the members of that body. 1 Cor. xii. 27. From whence it follows, that there can be but one body or church of CHRIST. Though the church of CHRIST, therefore, may be divided into ſeveral branches or particular churches, as from diſtance of place and circumſtances muſt be the caſe; yet it cannot be divided into diſtinct and ſeparate churches, unconnected and independent of each other; for

this would deſtroy the *unity* of the church. The *unity of the church* then is formed by that bond of communion, which, in conſequence of that Divine covenant which is common to all its members, conſolidates, as it were, all the ſeveral ſcattered parts or branches of the Chriſtian church into one connected body, under the title of the *Catholic Church of* CHRIST.

To be in the church communion, therefore, ſignifies to be a member of the church or body of CHRIST; which, however diſperſed, is but one all the world over; in conſequence of which the Chriſtian communicates, as circumſtances may require, with any branch of the Chriſtian church, in whatever quarter it may be ſituated.

From hence the true notion of a ſeparate church, or ſeparate communion, in which the ſin of ſchiſm conſiſts, may be clearly underſtood. For, though many allow that there is ſuch a ſin as ſchiſm, and appear ſenſible of the enormity of it, they yet take ſuch pains to avoid the charge of its being brought againſt themſelves, that, in their deſcription of what is to be underſtood by a ſeparation from the church, they ſo confound the ſubject, as that neither they themſelves, nor any one elſe, ſhall underſtand what it is.

But if, according to the premiſes, "there is but *one* church and *one* communion, of which of all true Chriſtians and Chriſtian churches are, and ought to be, members;" then thoſe churches which are not members of each other, are *ſeparate* churches.

"Where there are two churches which are not members of each other, there is a *ſchiſm*, though they agree in every thing elſe, but in one communion; for there is a diviſion of the body of CHRIST: and where churches own each other's communion, as members of the ſame body, there is no ſchiſm; though they are as diſtant from each other as Eaſt and Weſt."* Whenever, therefore, there is a new church, or a ſociety of Chriſtians calling themſelves a church, gathered out of a church already conſtituted and regularly eſtabliſhed, and formed into a diſtinct and ſeparate ſociety, this, by dividing Chriſtian communion, makes a notorious ſchiſm. The application of this poſition to the caſe of all thoſe different ſocieties of Chriſtians who ſeparate from the eſtabliſhed church in this country, is left to yourſelf. My object is only to ſtate clearly the nature of ſchiſm,

* See "Reſolution of ſome Caſes of Conſcience, which reſpect Church Communion, by Dr. SHERLOCKE, in London Caſes, vol. i. page 60.

as it was underſtood by the primitive church, and as it is now underſtood by our own church; which conſiſts, to make uſe of primitive language, in ſetting up altar againſt altar; by which, in conſequence of that bond of communion, by which the church of CHRIST was deſigned to be held together, being broken, Chriſtians are divided from each other.

Having thus briefly laid before you the true meaning of theſe important words, *church communion and ſchiſm*, I turn to page 179 of your publication, where you have given me a long extract from the writings of a Dr. EDWARDS, who if he be the ſame Dr. EDWARDS who has been mentioned in a former part of this letter, was, what, I am ſorry to ſay, ſometimes happens to be the caſe, a diſſenter in *principle*, though a churchman by *profeſſion*. The Doctor, after ſetting out with a proper definition of the word *ſchiſm*, "that it is an unlawful breach of the orders and inſtitutions of the Chriſtian church, and an unwarrantable ſeparation from its communion," by degrees ſteals off from the ground upon which he ſet out; till, after having proved that there is no church, that Chriſtians can be called upon to hold communion with, he concludes, "that thoſe profane perſons are the *true* ſeparatiſts from the

church, who never worſhip GOD in public." So that, according to the Doctor's ingenious diſquiſition on this ſubject, to ſeparate from the church, and ſet up a communion in oppoſition to the communion of of the church, means no more than to abſent from the worſhip of it.

According to the Doctor's firſt poſition in favour of ſeparatiſts from the church, that they cannot poſſibly be ſchiſmatics, becauſe "there is not one individual aſſembly that worſhips GOD according to the manner preſcribed in ſcripture, but they are ready to communicate with it:" there will be nó ſuch thing as obligation to church unity, and conſequently no ſuch thing as ſchiſm in the world. For I would be glad to know, what manner of worſhip was preſcribed in ſcripture for the direction of Chriſtians in this reſpect, when the Apoſtles conſidered every ſeparation from the communion of the then eſtabliſhed church as *ſchiſm*. If the obligation to church unity depend upon a manner of worſhip preſcribed for that purpoſe in ſcripture, and no ſuch manner of worſhip is to be found, there can be no ſuch thing as church unity at all: conſequently, thoſe who created diviſions in the primitive church, might have told the Apoſtles, in reply to their cenſures on that ſubject, that they

could not poſſibly be ſchiſmatics, becauſe they were ready to communicate with any aſſembly that worſhipped GOD according to the manner preſcribed in ſcripture. According to the Doctor's curious logic, therefore, at the time they were actually guilty of the ſin of ſchiſm, by ſeparating from the eſtabliſhed Apoſtolic church, they were at unity with it.

The Doctor's concluding poſition, by which he makes *ſeparating* from the church, and *abſenting* from it, to mean the ſame thing, proves that he thought his cauſe fairly run out, and that he was quite at a loſs for an argument to prevent its falling breathleſs to the ground.

There is ſtill one plauſible idea upon this ſubject, which, from its great prevalency, muſt not be paſſed by unnoticed. It is found in page 156 of your book, where, ſpeaking of the eſtabliſhed clergy and their Diſſenting brethren, you ſay, "whilſt they are agreed in *eſſentials* and *fundamentals*, let them not fall out about *ceremonials* and *circumſtantials*." This is an idea, I beg leave to ſay, that was never heard of in the church till theſe latter days; and it is an idea perfectly inconſiſtent with the unity of the Chriſtian church. But, to take this matter on your own ground: if the members of the eſtabliſhed church and diſſenters from

it are agreed in eſſentials and fundamentals, as you ſeem to allow them to be, it follows that the ſeparation of the diſſenters from the eſtabliſhed church, which conſtitutes the ſin of ſchiſm, is occaſioned by an attention to mere *non-eſſentials*. Still, in this caſe you think the clergy of the church ſhould not diſpute and fall out with the diſſenters about *ceremonials and circumſtantials;* at the ſame time no notice at all is taken of the diſſenters having fallen out with the church on that very account.

Now, Sir, allowing that ceremonials and circumſtantials, when compared with eſſential doctrines, are matters of indifference; ſtill, would it not be more reaſonable and more conſiſtent with that order and government, without which no ſociety can ſubſiſt, and which in this country has received the ſanction of legiſlative authority, that the diſſenter ſhould not fall out with the church on ſuch an account; than that the clergy ſhould themſelves go out of the church to countenance a ſchiſm, that is to be traced up to ſo unjuſtifiable a cauſe? Addreſs this argument to the diſſenter, to induce him to return to the church, from which, according to the principle here laid down by yourſelf, he ought not to have ſeparated, and it is unanſwerable; but when addreſſed

to the clergy of the church, to induce them to communicate in ſchiſm, it becomes an argument, which it might have been hoped no member of the church would have uſed.

But if we examine this ſubject a little further, it will appear that the plauſible ground you have here taken will prove very unſound, when tried by its proper ſtandard.

By eſſentials and fundamentals you mean the *pure word of* GOD, and the adminiſtration of the ſacraments. According to Dr. EDWARDS's poſition, which you ſeem to have embraced, thoſe places of worſhip among the diſſenters, "where the pure word of GOD is preached, and the ſacraments duly adminiſtered according to CHRIST's ordinance, are true churches, and therefore not *ſchiſmatical*."

I am ſorry to be obliged to object, both to the premiſes, and the concluſions. In the firſt place, the ſacraments are not *duly* adminiſtered according to CHRIST's ordinance, unleſs they are adminiſtered by thoſe who (in Biſhop BURNET's words) have been ordained, according to that conſtitution which was ſettled in the church by the Apoſtles." The congregations of diſſenters are on that account, in the language of our *Canons*, "not true and lawful

churches." But, allowing that they were true churches, they would ſtill be *ſchiſmatical*; becauſe they have broken away from the communion of the eſtabliſhed church: for as the church of CHRIST is but *one*, there cannot be two ſeparate communions in it without *ſchiſm*; and the ſchiſm lies on the ſide of that party which ſeparates; for to ſeparate from a church eſtabliſhed by public authority, which has nothing ſinful in its communion, is both diſobedience to the ſupreme authority in the ſtate, and a *ſchiſm* from the true church.

Admitting, then, the congregations of diſſenters to be true churches, it is not ſufficient to prove that they are not *ſchiſmatical*, becauſe they agree in all the eſſential articles of faith and worſhip with the church of England. This was the caſe of the Donatiſts, who yet were ſchiſmatics from the Catholic church. Whereas, as we have above obſerved, where there are two churches which are not members of each other, there is a ſchiſm, though they ſhould agree in every thing but a communion; and the church on whoſe ſide the ſchiſm lies, is, according to the primitive language, *extra eccleſiam foris*, out of the Catholic church.

The miſtake which prevails on this ſubject, and which has led many members of the church to communicate in ſchiſm without being conſcious of it, has ariſen from want of attending to the true nature of the ſin of ſchiſm. Many well-meaning perſons have been apt to think, that provided they hear the doctrine of the church, it ſignifies not *where they hear it;* or with what congregations of Chriſtians they aſſemble. But they ſhould remember that the ſin of ſchiſm reſpects not only the doctrine taught, but alſo the place where it is taught. A departure from the doctrine, properly ſpeaking, conſtitutes *hereſy;* a departure from the church communion conſtitutes *ſchiſm.* There may be hereſy where there is no ſchiſm; as in the caſe of a *corrupt* church: and there may be ſchiſm where there is no hereſy; as where diviſion takes place in a *pure* church. The firſt ſchiſm or diviſion of the church that we read of, took place among the Chriſtians at Corinth: it conſiſted in each congregation of diſciples attaching themſelves to one particular miniſter; thereby dividing and breaking the unity of the church, by which all Chriſtian congregations were to join in communion with each other. One ſaid, "I am of PAUL, and I of APOLLOS, and I of CEPHAS, and I of CHRIST," &c. 1 Cor. i.

12. *Here* was ſchiſm without hereſy: for in this caſe the ſame pure doctrine was preached in each of the congregations; the preachers being all Apoſtolic men. The Chriſtians therefore might have attended the miniſtry of any of theſe teachers; for a pure branch of the Chriſtian church was aſſembled under each of them. But their confining themſelves to one particular teacher, and thereby making ſeparate communions, which cauſed contentions in the church, was that ſin* of ſchiſm, againſt which ST. PAUL thought it neceſſary to write to the Corinthians with ſuch ſtrength and deciſion.

To prevent this ſin, which, it was foreſeen, would be of fatal conſequence to the peace and unity of the church, ST. JEROM tells us, one choſen from among the preſbyters was placed in an office of ſuperior dignity above his brethren, with the appropriate title of biſhop; for the purpoſe of his being the center of unity, and ſource of eccleſiaſtical government to all the particular churches within his jurisdiction: that, like the key-ſtone of an arch, he might prevent the ſeveral parts of it from falling away from each other. And on this ground the

* A ſin which Dr. EDWARDS allows to be "as deſtructive to the ſouls of men, as any ſin whatever."

ancient rule of the Catholic church was built, that there muſt be but *one church and one biſhop* in a city in one place; the ſeveral particular churches in that place being conſidered as concentered under that one biſhop. And the ſame idea has ever ſince prevailed on this ſubject; according to which, ſeveral particular churches are conſidered to be one church under its biſhop; each biſhop being the center of union to all the churches within his reſpective dioceſe.

If then the diſciples at Corinth, who received the pure doctrine from Apoſtolic men, and ſubmitted to their government, were conſidered as guilty of ſchiſm, in attempting, from a prejudice to particular teachers, to divide the church into ſeparate communions; thoſe Chriſtians, who have not only ſeparated from the communion of our Apoſtolic church, but have alſo openly renounced its government, unleſs the word ſchiſm has loſt all its original ſignification, muſt, *a fortiori*, be deemed *ſchiſmatics*.

In deſcribing the true church of CHRIST, we muſt deſcribe it by that, by which it is diſtinguiſhed in the world as an eccleſiaſtical ſociety, namely, by its Apoſtolic government; in the ſame manner as in deſcribing any political ſociety, we muſt deſcribe it by the ſeveral branches of its executive government.

Now although the preſervation of the doctrine of the Goſpel in one caſe, and the adminiſtration of the laws of the ſtatute book in the other, were the two ends for which the governments in church and ſtate were eſtabliſhed; yet theſe two eſſential objects do not conſtitute the characteriſtic marks by which the government in either caſe is diſtinguiſhed. For as the ſame excellent laws may be adminiſtered under different kinds of government, ſo the ſame doctrine may be taught in different ſocieties of Chriſtians; from whence it follows, that neither the laws on the one hand, nor the doctrine on the other, are of themſelves ſufficient, abſtractedly conſidered, to determine the conſtitution either of the ſtate or of the church. Where the church is, there the pure doctrine ought always to be found; and there, generally ſpeaking, it will moſt certainly be found; but as the pure doctrine is ſome times found where the church is not, therefore the pure doctrine does not conſtitute the only mark by which the church is to be known.

The characteriſtic mark, then, by which the church of CHRIST, as an eccleſiaſtical ſociety, is diſtinguiſhed in the world, is its Apoſtolic government.* Where this mark is not to be found, the *viſible church*, ac-

* Vide quotation from ST. IGNATIUS, in "*Guide*," page 27.

cording to the idea that has always prevailed on this ſubject, does not exiſt. And the reaſon why ſo much has been ſaid at all times upon the neceſſity of church communion, and the evil conſequences reſulting from ſeparation from it, is, becauſe the government of the church by which the unity of it is ſecured, is neceſſary to the preſervation of the eſſential object, for the promotion of which it was originally eſtabliſhed.

From the foregoing premiſes, the difference between a *corrupt church*, a *ſchiſmatical church*, and a congregation *not poſſeſſing the eſſentials to make it a church*, will, according to the old and eſtabliſhed notions, be clearly aſcertained. A *corrupt church* is in poſſeſſion of the eſſentials neceſſary to the being of a church, though in conſequence of its corruption communion with it may be dangerous and ſinful. Such a church is the preſent church of Rome. Purge away its corruption, and it will become a ſound church; but with its corruption it is a *true* one, for the reaſon above given.

A *ſchiſmatical church* is a church that breaks off from communion with the Catholic church, as the Novations and Donatiſts did of old. Under this head are alſo to be claſſed thoſe congregations of Chriſtians aſſembled under an epiſcopal clergy,

who maintain an independence on the biſhop in whoſe dioceſe they are ſituated, and to whoſe government they ought to be under obedience. Such is the caſe with thoſe epiſcopalian congregations in Scotland, if they may be ſo called, who, by breaking away from the centre of unity in their reſpective biſhops, are thereby become *ſchiſmatical*, and as ſuch would in the primitive days of the church have had the heavieſt of eccleſiaſtical cenſures pronounced againſt them. My hearty deſire to GOD for my brethren in Scotland is, that they might take this ſubject into ſerious conſideration. Would to GOD that they would reflect upon the injury they are doing to the unity of the Chriſtian church in general, and to that of their own church in particular, the pureſt church perhaps this day in Chriſtendom. Would that they would call to mind the memorable words of that primitive biſhop and martyr, ST. IGNATIUS—"Οσοι γαρ Χριςȣ εισιν, ȣτοι μετα τȣ Επισκοπȣ εισιν:" and at the ſame time look forward to the account they will one day have to give to that Head of the church, whoſe commiſſion they hold.

Bearing ſome reſemblance to theſe independent congregations are thoſe places of public worſhip which the licentiouſneſs of the preſent times have introduced

among us; where, though the liturgy of the church of England be made uſe of, both miniſter and people, by breaking away from all connexion with the biſhop, are living in a ſtate of ſchiſm. In ſuch places, Sir, the ſervice of the church of England is not performed, as you ſay in page 155, "according to the *rites* of that church;" for the rites of the church of England require, that its ſervice ſhould be performed not only by an epiſcopally-ordained miniſter, but alſo in a place ſubject to epiſcopal juriſdiction. In ſuch *extra* epiſcopal places of worſhip to which I am now alluding, you may have the words of the liturgy and the forms of the church; but the ſervice of the church, according to the rites of the church of England, you certainly have not, nor can have.

Every congregation of Chriſtians, which is not formed according to the plan of government eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles, poſſeſſes not the eſſentials to make it a church. It is therefore, upon the authority of thoſe canons to which you have appealed, not a *true* and *lawful* church. The concluſion from the foregoing conſideration ſhall be drawn in the words of Dean SHERLOCK, to whoſe diſcourſe I would refer you for the complete handling of this important ſubject.

" It is thought of late days not only a very innonocent and lawful thing, but the true Catholic ſpirit, to communicate with churches of all communions. Thus ſome who communicate ordinarily with the church of England, make no ſcruple to communicate in prayers and ſacraments with Preſbyterian and Independent churches; and Preſbyterians communicate with the church of England and with Independents, whom formerly they charged with downright ſchiſm; and ſome think it very indifferent whom they communicate with, and therefore take their turns in all. But this is as contrary to all the principles of church communion as any thing can poſſibly be. CHRIST hath but *one church* and *one body*, and therefore where there are *two* churches divided from each other by ſeparate communions, there is a ſchiſm and rent in the body; and whoever communicates with both theſe churches, on one ſide or other communicates in *ſchiſm*. Now if ſchiſm be an innocent thing, and the true Catholic ſpirit, I have no more to ſay, but that the whole Chriſtian church ever ſince the Apoſtles' times has been in a great miſtake. But if ſchiſm be a very great ſin, and that which will damn us as ſoon as adultery and murder, then it muſt needs be a dangerous thing to communicate with ſchiſmatics.

"The ſum of all in ſhort is this: beſides theſe men who juſtify their ſeparation from the church of England, by charging her with requiring ſinful terms of communion, (which is the only thing that can juſtify their ſeparation, if it could be proved) there are others who ſeparate lightly and wantonly for want of a due ſenſe of the nature of church communion, and our obligations to preſerve the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace. They have no notion at all of a church, or no notion of our church, or know not wherein the unity and communion of the church conſiſts; and theſe men think it is indifferent whether they communicate with any church at all, or that they ſecure themſelves from ſchiſm by communicating ſometimes with one church and ſometimes with another, that they may chooſe their church according to their own fancies, and change them again whenever their humour alters. But I hope whoever conſiders carefully what I have now written, and attends to thoſe paſſionate exhortations of the Goſpel to peace, and unity, and brotherly love, which cannot be preſerved but in *one communion*, which is the unity of the body of CHRIST, and the peace and love of fellow members, will not only heartily pray to the GOD of peace to reſtore peace and unity to his church,

but be careful how he divides the church himself, and will uſe his utmoſt endeavours to heal the preſent ſchiſms and diviſions of the church of CHRIST."*

I would only obſerve, in addition to what has been ſaid, and with a view of narrowing this ſubject as much as may be, by confining it to the Chriſtians of this country, that that eſtabliſhed orthodox national church of which we boaſt, can bring forward more arguments to juſtify her in challenging conformity to her communion, than perhaps any church that ever yet exiſted in the world. For in addition to the Apoſtolic doctrine and government which it poſſeſſes in common with other churches, it has the legal eſtabliſhment of the country in which it is ſituated, which, upon the ſuppoſition that nothing ſinful is commanded, has a claim to the obedience of every ſubject.

To which conſiderations muſt be added the experience of the dreadful conſequences that have followed the deſtruction of its eſtabliſhment, together with the teſtimony which has been borne to the excellency of it by the moſt unprejudiced perſons. From whence it will follow, that ſeparation from ſuch a church muſt, of all ſeparations of the kind, be the moſt unwarrantable.

* See "Reſolution of ſome Caſes of Conſcience with reſpect to Church Communion," by Dr. SHERLOCK, in London Caſes, vol. i, p. 88, et ſeq.

To eſtabliſh the point reſpecting the teſtimony of unprejudiced perſons, I take leave to remind you of the opinion which learned foreigners have formed on this ſubject.

The names of CALVIN and BEZA have I think been already brought forward for this purpoſe. They declared that thoſe Chriſtians were worthy of every anathema, who ſeparated from ſuch an epiſcopacy as that of the church of England; and at certain times they ſcrupled not to ſpeak moſt decidedly and unequivocally upon the excellency of our church eſtabliſhment.

The foreign divines at the ſynod of Dort, in anſwer to what our Engliſh clergy had urged on the neceſſity of epiſcopal government in the church, according to the Apoſtolic plan, ſaid, "that they had a great honour for the good order and diſcipline of the church of England, and heartily wiſhed that they could eſtabliſh themſelves upon this model, lamenting that they had no proſpect of ſuch a happineſs; and ſince the civil government had made their deſires impracticable, they hoped GOD would be merciful to them." COLLIER, vol. ii. p. 178.

A long and decided quotation to the ſame point from the celebrated Monſieur LE CLERC has been already produced in my book. A ſhort one, from

another celebrated foreigner Monſieur DAILLE, who engaged in a learned controverſy with one of our beſt divines,* and not likely to be biaſſed by any partiality of judgment, ſhall be added. "As to the church of England, (ſays he) purged from foreign wicked ſuperſtitious worſhips and errors, either impious or dangerous, by the rule of the Divine ſcripture, approved of by many and illuſtrious martyrs, abounding with piety towards GOD, and charity towards men, and with moſt frequent examples of good works, flouriſhing with an increaſe of moſt learned and wiſe men from the beginning of the reformation to this time, I have always had it in true and juſt eſteem, and till I die I ſhall continue in the ſame due veneration of it." *De Confeſſ. adverſus* H. HAMMOND, c. i. page 97, 98.

The teſtimony of MELANCTHON to the excellency of epiſcopal government, though not directly applied to that of the church of England, may be conſidered, when we recollect the intimacy that prevailed between him and CRANMER, and the intereſt he took in the reformation of the Engliſh church, as deſigned to refer to it, and muſt therefore on that account be deemed as valuable as it is ſtrong.

* HAMMOND.

"Would to heaven (ſays he) that I could not only not enfeeble the power of biſhops, but eſtabliſh their *dominion*; for I ſee but too well what ſort of a church we are likely to have, if we demoliſh eccleſiaſtical government; I am ſure that the tyranny we have eſcaped (viz. that of Rome) will then be nothing to that which we ſhall ſee eſtabliſhed." SEWARD's Anecdotes, vol. iii. page 129.

How truly this prophecy of MELANCTHON was verified in the ſucceeding century in this country, when, as the late amiable and pious Biſhop HORNE has expreſſed it, "the little finger of preſbytery proved to be thicker than the loins of prelacy," forms too conſpicuous a page in our hiſtory, to require being pointed out.

There is ſtill one additional teſtimony, that of the learned GROTIUS, which I take leave to trouble you with on this occaſion; becauſe the celebrity of its author forbids its being paſſed over unnoticed.

From ſome paſſages to be met with in the letters of that learned perſon, HENRY NEWTON, ambaſſador extraordinary from the Queen of Great-Britain to his Royal Highneſs the Grand Duke of Tuſcany, it appears plainly that this great man, HUGO GROTIUS, had the higheſt opinion of the church of Eng-

land. In a letter to JOHN CLERC, there is the following paſſage, taken from a letter written by Viſcount SCUDAMORE, at that time ambaſſador from England in France, to Archbiſhop LAUD: "The next time I ſee Ambaſſador GROTIUS, I will not fail to perform your commands concerning him. Certainly, my Lord, I am perſuaded that he doth unfeignedly and highly love and reverence your perſon and proceedings. Body and ſoul, he profeſſeth himſelf to be for the church of England; and gives this judgment of it—that it is the likelieſt to laſt of any church this day in being." Genoa, 17th of the Kalends of February, M DCC VII.*

To the foregoing extract may be ſubjoined the character given of this great man by Archbiſhop BRAMHALL. "He was a friend, in his affection, to the church of England, and a true ſon, in his love for it: he commended it to his wife and other friends, and was the cauſe of their firmly adhering to it, as far as they had opportunity. I myſelf, and many others, have ſeen his wife obeying the commands of her huſband, as ſhe openly teſtified, in coming to our prayers and the celebration of the ſacraments."

* Vide Teſtimonies ſubjoined to CLARKE's Tranſlation of HUGO GROTIUS, page 348.

To ſum up this ſubject, then, in a few words.

The church is the body of CHRIST. He hath purchaſed it with his blood. All the privileges annexed to it are the conſequences of his meritorious ſufferings. To partake of the privileges of a ſociety, man muſt become a member of the ſociety, to which thoſe privileges belong. The church is a ſociety of CHRIST's forming: it cannot, therefore, be any thing that men pleaſe to make it. But that a man may become member of a ſociety, the ſociety itſelf muſt be diſtinguiſhed, ſo as to be known: for to call men to become members of an *inviſible* ſociety, ſeems to be, if not a contradiction, yet an abſurdity in terms. The characteriſtical mark which diſtinguiſhes any ſociety, is *its appropriate government.* The appropriate government of the *viſible* church is that epiſcopal form, which was originally eſtabliſhed by the Apoſtles: where that form of government is to be found, there the church of CHRIST, as a *viſible ſociety*, exiſts. From whence it follows, that every Chriſtian muſt know, if he will but conſider, whether he be living in a ſtate of communion with the church, or in a ſtate of ſeparation from it. If in the former condition, he is in the ſure road to ſalvation; "for He is faithful who hath promiſed:" the conſe-

quence of his being in the latter, it is not our buſineſs to determine. In this caſe, "as we know only in part, we therefore propheſy only in part." Still we know enough to authoriſe us to ſay, that the opinions of men can make no alteration in Divine inſtitutions; and though practice may render ſin ſo familiar, that all ſenſe of it ſhall be loſt, yet no practice can change the nature of it; conſequently that heinous ſin which ſchiſm was pronounced to be in the primitive days of the church, that ſin it muſt continue to be, ſo long as the church endureth.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

IN the foregoing Letters, "I have, as near as I could, ſeriouſly anſwered things of weight; with ſmaller I have dealt as I thought their quality did require."*

It was not ſo much my object to point out the weakneſs of the ground which you occaſionally take, as to examine the ſtrength of it, wherever it was was to be found: much leſs was it my wiſh to take notice of thoſe *littleneſſes*, which will ſometimes creep into our writings, in ſpite of our better judgment; which, on the ſuppoſition that they really apply to the man to whom they are addreſſed, do not belong to the cauſe in which he is engaged. "The diſcourteſies which we experience, (ſaid the excellent JORTIN, alluding to the reception which ſome of his writings met with from thoſe who differed from him

* HOOKER.

in opinion) are things too common and too inſignificant, to deſerve a place in our memory, or in our writings; it is beſt to bury them in eternal oblivion." Dedication to the ſecond volume of Remarks, &c.

The object in view in my publication, however indifferent the execution of it may be, ought to have entitled the author to the candour, if not to the good opinion of every well-wiſher to the eſtabliſhment. For the axiom, that without religion no government can long ſubſiſt, is not, I believe, a more decided one, than that the appointment of ſome regular eccleſiaſtical conſtitution is neceſſary to the preſervation of pure doctrine.

Our SAVIOUR thought ſo, and therefore eſtabliſhed his church: that, as it was the office of the prieſts under the law to keep the light always burning in the temple, ſo it ſhould become the office of their ſucceſſors under the Goſpel, ſo to keep the pure light of Divine truth burning in the church, as thereby to preſerve it from being blown out by the falſe doctrines, which He, in his wiſdom, foreſaw the vain imaginations of men would be continually raiſing up.

When we communicate with fleſh and blood, we may think nothing eſſential in Divine worſhip, but what our own fancies may direct: we may ſeparate

from the temple of the LORD, and with JEROBOAM "caſt off the prieſts from executing their office." 2 Chron. xi. 14. But when we ſee GOD's will by his word, we find, that under the Goſpel, as under the law, there are certain poſitive inſtitutions, which do not leave to Chriſtians that liberty in religious matters, which ſome among them have been at times apt to imagine. The GOD whom we worſhip has, under every diſpenſation, diſtinguiſhed himſelf as the God of order, not of confuſion. The offices and ſervice of the Jewiſh temple had the ſanction of his expreſs appointment; and every violation of order, under that diſpenſation, was followed by an immediate judgment on the party. To ſecure the worſhip of the true GOD from the corruption of heathen idolatry, it was deemed neceſſary, in the council of Divine wiſdom, to reſtrain the vain imaginations of men by ſome ſettled and appointed forms. This idea gave riſe to the eſtabliſhment of that œconomy, which was deſigned as introductory to a more perfect ſyſtem, by which the Jewiſh people, as the keepers of the oracles of GOD, Rom. iii. 2, were diſtinguiſhed from all the nations of the world.

In conformity with the ſame idea, of preſerving the knowledge of that ſalvation which was prefigured

under the law; did our SAVIOUR eſtabliſh his church under the Goſpel; upon which occaſion the oracles of GOD and the myſteries of religion were delivered to appointed guardians, for the purpoſe of their being duly adminiſtered for the benefit of mankind. This treaſure, as the Apoſtle calls it, was committed, it is true, to *earthen veſſels*, who ſtood in need of Divine aſſiſtance to enable them to preſerve their important charge; ſtill it was committed to them, that it might be ſo continued in them, as to become a ſtandard of faith, neceſſary to ſecure the unity of the church.

When GOD enters into covenant with man, there muſt be ſome *viſible appointed* miniſters, and *viſible* ſacraments, for the purpoſe of applying the benefits of that covenant to the parties concerned in it. Without theſe inſtituted means of grace, the viſibility of the church of CHRIST will not be preſerved in the world. And if there be no *viſible church communion*, men will by degrees return to the religion of nature; a religion without a prieſt, and without a ſacrifice; in which no man ſhall be ſaved, who rejects that plan of Goſpel ſalvation that has been provided for him.

To counteract this gracious plan, has been the uniform object of the grand deceiver of mankind

from the beginning. With this view he has been engaged, in every age of the world, in ſetting up the vain imaginations of the creature againſt the revealed religion of the *Creator*; "ſeeing (as ST. AUGUSTINE obſerved) the temples of the heathen idols deſerted, and the world running after the name of CHRIST,"* his kingdom would have been at an end among mankind, had he not ſucceeded, by impure mixtures and imaginations, ſo to corrupt the doctrine of the *croſs*, as to render it but partially effectual to the purpoſe for which it had been revealed. Under his patronage the philoſophy of the Gentile and the ſuperſtition of the Jew have, under different forms, been received among Chriſtians: the former, by annexing new and ſtrange interpretations to certain paſſages of ſcripture, has made the word of GOD ſubſervient to the propagation of human theories: the latter, by piecing out (as Biſhop ANDREWS expreſſes it in his ſermon on Acts ii. 42) the new garments with old rags of traditions; that is, by adding to and eeking out GOD's truth with men's phanſies, with the philacteries and fringes of the Phariſees, has tended to bury the ſimplicity of the Goſpel under that load of ſuper-

* "Videns diabolus templa dæmonum deſeri, et in nomen CHRISTI currere genus humanum," &c. AUG. de Civitat. 18.

ſtitious ceremonies, which were thought neceſſary to accompany its propagation.

The Reformation in this country, by purging our church from numberleſs corruptions, reſtored the religion of it, in a great meaſure, to its primitive perfection. But though our church has happily diſcarded ſuperſtition, ſhe has not been able to guard againſt the powerful effects of that engine, which her grand enemy has ſince been employing againſt her. Whilſt ſuperſtition prevailed, the groſs errors that accompanied it, enſured, in a great degree, the failure of the object for which the church had been eſtabliſhed: but when the eyes of the Chriſtian were opened, and became ſufficiently ſtrong to look through that veil of corruption, which had by degrees been drawn over the Chriſtian doctrines, and the church of this country was placed once again on primitive ground; diviſion among its members was the engine, by which the deſtruction of the Chriſtian cauſe remained to be effected.

For this purpoſe the vain imaginations of men were again ſet at work, and the language of ſcripture wreſted and tortured, in order to give countenance to the different ſenſes which ſelf-ſufficient profeſſors had determined to draw from it. The *unity* of the

church fell a ſacrifice to the fatal experiment; for it could not be expected that men who no longer agreed in the ſame mind or in the ſame doctrine, ſhould continue in Chriſtian communion with each other. "In Babel, the *city of confuſion*," ſays Biſhop ANDREWS, "every philoſopher might ſet up, as now every ſect-maker may broach, any imagination that taketh him in his head; for in Babel it is reckoned but an indifferent matter. But the prophets tell us, that if Babylon's *confuſion* go before, the *captivity* of Babylon is not far behind."*

It was not long before the event which the good Biſhop foreſaw actually took place. The diviſion of the church in this country proved but the prelude to its deſtruction.

It pleaſed GOD, however, that his church, being raiſed from its ſtate of humiliation, ſhould again become the glory of our land. But, alas! the ſeeds of ſeparation from it had been too widely ſpread ever to be eradicated. Much pains, indeed, were taken to reunite the ſcattered members of the church, though with little effect. The arguments made uſe of by our eminent clergy on this occaſion were unanſwerable;†

* Biſhop ANDREWS's Sermon on Acts ii. 42.

† See the London Caſes particularly.

but, alas! the prejudices of men were invincible. Vain imaginations were ſtill ſet up againſt that ſenſe of ſcripture, which had ever been acknowledged by the primitive church, and thus a ſchiſm kept alive among Chriſtians, becauſe ſome were too ſelf-conceited to receive inſtruction, others too proud to give up opinions that had once been maintained.

Under theſe unhappy circumſtances, however, the church in this country ſtill ſtood upon high ground. It was univerſally looked up to as a moſt reſpectable branch of the church of CHRIST. Communion with it was uniformly inſiſted upon as abſolutely neceſſary to the preſervation of Chriſtian unity: and ſeparation from it, which even by the ſeparating parties was conſidered more as a matter of grievous neceſſity than a ſubject for proud boaſting, was unequivocally condemned as *ſchiſmatic*.

The change of ſentiment which appears to have taken place on this ſubject is *peculiar* to the preſent age. The ideas about Chriſtian unity and church communion which now prevail, are ſuch as never yet prevailed in the world. It is not here meant that ſuch wild ideas were not occaſionally broached by individual ſeparatiſts, but that they were never ſuffered

to paſs for ſterling by thoſe who profeſſed themſelves to be members of the Chriſtian church.

The looſe writings which, I am ſorry to ſay, have not unfrequently had miniſters of the church for their authors, have by degrees introduced among Chriſtians that looſe habit of thinking upon church matters, that words which formerly had a determinate idea annexed to them muſt now be accompanied with a new definition, before we can underſtand the meaning intended to be conveyed by them. By the *Catholic church* was heretofore underſtood that viſible ſociety of Chriſtians aſſembled under that form of government eſtabliſhed by Apoſtolic authority, of which the national church in this country conſtituted a conſpicuous branch. Every unwarrantable ſeparation from this *Catholic* church, by which a communion among Chriſtians diſtinct from and independent of the communion of the Catholic church was eſtabliſhed, ſubjected the ſeparating party to the charge of *ſchiſm*; for as the church of CHRIST was but one, there could not, as has been already obſerved, be two ſeparate communions in it without diviſion, and in this diviſion conſiſted the ſin of *ſchiſm*.

Now, although our opinions upon ſubjects may alter with times, yet the ſubjects themſelves, if

they were ever true, muſt remain the ſame. The church of CHRIST is ſtill that viſible ſociety under a regularly-appointed government it ever was; and diviſions among Chriſtians, by which the communion of that church is broken, muſt ſtill be that work of the fleſh, which ST. PAUL has deſcribed it to be. Any attempt, therefore, to deſcribe the church of CHRIST in language inapplicable to that ſtate, in which its Divine Founder deſigned that it ſhould exiſt in this world as a *viſible ſociety;* and to repreſent the communion of the church in ſuch a ſenſe as to lead Chriſtians to conclude, that it is a ſubject of unimportant concern with what ſociety of worſhippers they are aſſembled, provided they hold the faith; is not only to render the Apoſtolic writings, and all ſubſequent writings upon theſe ſubjects, totally unintelligible to Chriſtians; but it is moreover to lead them into a dangerous error upon what has ever been regarded as a moſt important conſideration.

Your manner of writing, I am ſorry to ſay, appears calculated to produce this effect. At the ſame time, therefore, that I bear teſtimony to your diſtinguiſhed zeal and piety as an individual Chriſtian, I muſt be decidedly of opinion, that as a member of CHRIST's church, you have not taken the ſteps neceſſary to make

you properly acquainted with the nature of that ſpiritual connexion; you otherwiſe would certainly not have written as you have done.

ST. PAUL thought that *unity of worſhip*, as well as *unity of doctrine*, was eſſential to the Chriſtian church; or he would not have objected to ſeparate congregations under PAUL, CEPHAS, and APOLLOS, and have brought the charge of ſchiſm againſt thoſe Chriſtians who originally ſet them up. You think that, provided Chriſtians are agreed in eſſentials and fundamentals, it matters not into how many ſeparate independent congregations they are divided. ST. PAUL takes great pains to guard Chriſtians againſt diviſion, as deſtructive of Chriſtian charity, which it always will be more or leſs; you are perſuading Chriſtians that it is a matter of no conſequence at all: and in order to confirm your new theory of Chriſtian unity by your practice, after having deſcribed yourſelf, in the outſet of your book, as "a member of the church of England, poſſeſſing a ſincere attachment to it in doctrine, conſtitution, and diſcipline," page 5, you inform us, you are an attendant at various places of worſhip in a ſtate of ſeparation from it, and ſeem to conſider thoſe perſons as *narrow-minded* and *illiberal*, who have not the ſame notion on this ſubject with yourſelf.

Now, Sir, there appears to me (to make uſe of the ſofteſt term) to be a wonderful inconſiſtency between your profeſſion and your practice. You profeſs yourſelf a member of the church of England; and to have an attachment to its doctrine, conſtitution, and diſcipline. How does this appear? Allowing your principle to be good, does your practice conform to it? You ſeparate from the church, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member; and, admitting that you hold her doctrine, you give the world to underſtand, that her conſtitution is a ſubject of no great conſideration in your eyes; and againſt its diſcipline you openly offend. For every time you attend a place of public worſhip, ſeparated from the communion of the church of England, you communicate in *ſchiſm;* and in ſo doing, offend againſt the diſcipline of that branch of CHRIST's church, which has been eſtabliſhed in this country.

It was an Apoſtolical precept to the members of the Chriſtian church, "that they ſhould obey them who had the rule over them, and ſubmit themſelves." Heb. xiii. 17. Obedience, therefore, to ſpiritual governors cannot be a matter of indifference. The governors of the church, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member, enjoin a regular communion with it;

and conſider every unwarrantable ſeparation from it to be ſinful. But provided you can find an aſſembly of Chriſtians in a ſtate of ſeparation from the church, in which the pure doctrine is taught, you feel yourſelf at liberty to join it; conſidering that "*unity of doctrine* is the *only* ground upon which unity in the churches of CHRIST can poſſibly ſtand." Page 156. Thus you become, upon principle, a ſeparatiſt from the communion of the church, at the ſame time that you perſuade yourſelf that you are at unity with it.

But obedience to our ſpiritual governors can reſpect only the *order* and *government* of the church, for in *doctrine* Chriſtians are to obey no man. He, therefore, who obeys not his ſpiritual governors in thoſe things which fall under their juriſdiction, may be ſaid to obey them in nothing.

You ſay, indeed, page 156, that this idea of church unity, founded upon unity in doctrine, is adopted by all the great divines and biſhops of our church. This, Sir, is the truth, but not the whole truth. *Unity of doctrine* is certainly an eſſential ingredient; neceſſary, if we may ſo ſay, to the compoſition of the unity of the church; but it is not the *only* ingredient. There muſt be alſo added to it, unity in worſhip, and unity in diſcipline. Without a combination of all theſe

ſeveral circumſtances, the church cannot be ſaid to be at unity in itſelf. The early Chriſtians, we read, continued not only in the Apoſtle's doctrine, but alſo in *their fellowſhip*, as well as in breaking of bread and in prayers; in other words, they continued in communion with that ſociety which the Apoſtles had formed, and in the uſe of that mode of worſhip which they had preſcribed.

Indeed, if nothing more was eſſential to the unity of the church than purity of doctrine, the body of CHRIST might be divided and ſubdivided *in infinitum*, and yet there might be no ſchiſm; but this being in direct contradiction to the Apoſtle's judgment on this ſubject, the concluſion is, that ſomething more is neceſſary to fill up the idea meant to be conveyed by the unity of the Chriſtian church than you ſeem to admit; and upon a fair reference to the great divines of our church, ſuch as *ANDREWS*, *HOOKER*, *HAMMOND*, *REYNOLDS*, and *LESLEY*, to mention no other, you will moſt certainly find this to be the caſe.

If any regard is to be paid to the authority of thoſe writers who have entered particularly into the preſent ſubject, enough, it might be ſuppoſed, had been already advanced to demonſtrate this poſition, that the church is not only a number of people agreeing in the

ſame articles of faith, (although ſuch unity of belief be an eſſential conſtituent of the church) but it is alſo a ſociety holding one viſible communion under the ſame Divinely-inſtituted government; in one word, it is a *ſociety of* CHRIST'S *framing*. *Oppoſite* altars are like *oppoſite* thrones; different governments cannot make one ſociety. Monarchy and republicaniſm cannot exiſt together. A church as well as a kingdom, in a ſtate of diviſion, muſt in the end be diſſolved. I ſhall detain the reader no longer on this part of my ſubject, than to bring forward what has been ſaid on it by ST. AUGUSTIN, his opinion being of that diſcriminating and decided nature as to leave no poſſible room either for doubt or miſconſtruction.

In one place, addreſſing himſelf to the Donatiſts, he ſays, with his uſual diſcernment, "Ye are with us in baptiſm, in the *creed*, and in all the other rites of our LORD's inſtitution. But in the ſpirit of unity, and bond of peace; finally, in *the church itſelf ye are not with me.*" Epiſt 93, page 230, ſect. 46, edit. BENED. Again, in another place, ſpeaking on the ſame ſubject; "In many things they were with me; both of us held baptiſm; in that they were with me. Both of us read the Goſpel; in that they were with me. We kept the feaſts of the martyrs; herein they

were with me. We were conſtant at the anniverſary of Eaſter; herein they were with me. But they were not *altogether* with me. In *ſchiſm* they were not with me; in hereſy they were not with me. In *many* things they were with me; in ſome few things they were not with me. But by reaſon of the *few* things in which they are not with me, the *many* things in which they are with me, do not *profit* them." Enarratio in Ps. 54, tom. iv, page 512. "Therefore, as the holy Apoſtle, biſhop, and bleſſed martyr, IGNATIUS, exhorteth the church in Philadelphia, earneſtly endeavour to partake of the ſame Euchariſt. For there is one fleſh of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and one cup for the uniting of his blood. One altar, as there is one biſhop, (ſaith he) with the preſbytery (*i. e.* the prieſts) and deacons, my fellow-ſervants; that whatever ye do, ye may do it according to (the inſtitution of) GOD." Sec. 4. The concluſion to which the foregoing decided paſſages evidently lead, is this; that if the viſible communion of Chriſtians, in all acts of religion, was in the early days of the church conſidered neceſſary to compleat the character of the church, as a viſible ſociety, living under the ſame Divinely-inſtituted government, the ſame viſible communion muſt be equally neceſſary in the preſent day;

becauſe the church of CHRIST is in itſelf the ſame ſociety it then was; conſequently, that idea of church unity muſt be an *imperfect* one, that does not comprehend within it the foregoing eſſential conſideration.

Now, Sir, whilſt you deceive yourſelf on the ſubject of Chriſtian unity, by miſtaking a profeſſion of ſound doctrine for a ſpiritual incorporation into the ſame viſible ſociety, which comprehends under it a conſtant communion in all thoſe offices and duties by which Chriſtians, as members of that ſociety, are joined together; we cannot be ſurpriſed, that your manner of writing ſhould be calculated to deceive others. Page 199 appears to me to be one of thoſe pages of your book which muſt tend more to confound, than inform, your reader. Should he be a plain Chriſtian, poſſeſſing an attachment to the church of England; it is but too probable, after the peruſal of it, that you will leave him in ſome ſtate of doubt and uncertainty with reſpect to the proper object of his attachment. He finds a diſtinction made between the eſtabliſhed church of his country, and the church of CHRIST, ſcripturally ſo called, which he never thought of before; and where there is a diſtinction, he is naturally led to conclude there muſt be ſome difference. He is then told, that the miniſter of the

church, who has been pleading for conformity to the eſtabliſhed church of this country, as a branch of that viſible ſociety to which all Chriſtians ought to be gathered, has been pleading only for a *national* eſtabliſhment, for the forms and capariſons of religion, matters of inferior conſideration; but that he, who is ſeeking for higher things, "*ſublimiora petamus*," has been contending for the *true ſcripture church of* CHRIST, "which is to be found in every aſſembly of perſons, who worſhip GOD in the ſpirit, rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no confidence in the fleſh." Thus the plain regular churchman is inſenſibly drawn away from the eſtabliſhed church of his country; upon the idea, that the *true church* of CHRIST is to be found among ſome other ſocieties of Chriſtians.

This ſavours ſo ſtrongly of the old Puritan doctrine, of ſetting up the purity of the church againſt the eſtabliſhment of it; as if they were two things not to be found together; that I ſhould have concluded it to be an idea, to which you, Sir, as a profeſſed member of the eſtabliſhed church, would not have given countenance.

In page 190, you unneceſſarily put the notion into your reader's head, that "a national eſtabliſhment is

one thing, and a Chriſtian church *another*." I ſay *unneceſſarily*, becauſe we have nothing to do with the ſubject. In this country, a national eſtabliſhment and a Chriſtian church are *one* and the *ſame thing*; for, happily for us, they are in uniſon together. Moreover you muſt know, Sir, that the church of England is not defended, and the neceſſity of communion with it enforced, becauſe it is a *national* eſtabliſhment, but becauſe it is an *Apoſtolic church of* CHRIST.

You muſt know, if you will but give yourſelf time to conſider, that a doctrine that cries up purity to the ruin of unity, ought to be rejected; becauſe the Goſpel calls for *unity*, as well as *purity*. You muſt know, moreover, that every thing that is to be found in the true church, is to be met with in the eſtabliſhed church of this country; all the ſound members of which "worſhip GOD in the Spirit, rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no confidence in the fleſh;" becauſe you would not do juſtice to that church, of which you profeſs yourſelf a member, did you not acknowledge, that her ſpiritual ſervices are deſigned for the uſe of ſpiritual perſons; that by a progreſſive advancement from grace to grace, and from ſtrength to ſtrength, they might at length attain unto "the

fulneſs of ſtature in JESUS CHRIST;" and conſequently, that a concluſion, drawn either from the neglect or abuſe of thoſe ſervices ſtands on too weak ground to juſtify the conduct of any member of the church, as a reaſonable being, in turning his back on her communion. Whereas the plain member of the church, in conſequence of the falſe diſtinction here made between the *national* church and your *true church*, the fallacy of which he may be unable to diſcover, is led to expect ſomething of which he is not in poſſeſſion; and thereby to break away from that order and government, by which the church, as a ſociety, was deſigned to be held together.

The text which you have brought from ſcripture to eſtabliſh your idea of the church, as laid down in your 199th page, appears to me moſt inapplicable to your purpoſe. "The primitive church continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles' doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." The churches you plead for are thoſe ſocieties of Chriſtians which do not continue in the *Apoſtles' fellowſhip*, having broken away from communion with an Apoſtolic church; therefore the character of ſuch ſocieties does not correſpond ſo much with that of the primitive church, as with that which ST. JUDE has given

of thoſe Chriſtians, who "ſeparated themſelves, not having the Spirit." JUDE 9.

Your quotation from HOOKER appears to be not better choſen. HOOKER is ſpeaking of thoſe ſocieties of Chriſtians, to which the names of churches are given; which have (to make uſe of his words) ſome "properties common" to them, as "Chriſtian ſocieties;" and of theſe properties "one of the very chiefeſt is *eccleſiaſtical polity*." And, that the reader might be at no loſs for the ſenſe in which he was to be underſtood, HOOKER ſpecifies the churches of *Rome*, *Corinth*, *Epheſus*, and *England*, as thoſe public Chriſtian ſocieties to which he gave the name of churches; churches founded upon the regular Apoſtolic plan; not thoſe ſelf-conſtituted churches which you have in view, and which HOOKER would have been one of the laſt men to countenance.

Concerned, every time I take up your publication, to find myſelf obliged to differ from you in ſo many points, I am ſtill more ſorry to ſay, that of all the books I ever met with, written by a member of the church, the one you have put into my hand appears to me moſt calculated to confound, what our SAVIOUR meant to diſtinguiſh; I mean, his church

as a *viſible* ſociety, under a regularly-appointed government. Eccleſiaſtical government is uniformly repreſented by you as a matter of little conſideration. "In *circumſtantials* you think we may ſafely differ, without any ſchiſm in the body." Page 196. On the other hand, I think that government is that provident inſtitution, that, by keeping the body together, was deſigned to be a preſervative againſt ſchiſm. Government is the cement of every ſociety. Take away government, and ſociety becomes a rope of ſand. Every man, when left to himſelf, is for having a government of his own, of which, of courſe, he is to be dictator; and no ſociety, either religious or political, can be in a worſe condition, than when every man does what ſeemeth right in his own eyes. This was the caſe in Iſrael, when MICAH ſet up his falſe worſhip. Our SAVIOUR, knowing what was in man, did not leave his church in that wild ſtate, to which the imaginations of ſome would reduce it; by ſuppoſing every man at liberty to chooſe his own religion, and make his own prieſt. But from the tenour of your book the reader is led to conclude, that ſome new plan for directing the affairs of CHRIST'S church, preferable to that delivered by our SAVIOUR to his Apoſtles, had been found out; that, inſtead

of any particular form of government, it had been judged more adviſeable to leave Chriſtians at large to model churches according to their reſpective fancies. To this end the old eſtabliſhed marks, by which the church, as a *viſible* ſociety, has been ever diſtinguiſhed in the world, are either kept out of ſight, or repreſented as things of no moment; as circumſtantials, which in no wiſe affect the eſſence of religion; (to make uſe of your language, page 196) "rather as the garb with which the body is clothed, than as the body itſelf."

It ſhall be allowed, that the Apoſtolical government is the *garb*, with which the church, as CHRIST's body, is clothed; but if it be a garb that keeps the body warm and comfortable, and the members of it in a proper ſtate to diſcharge their ſeveral functions, and at the ſame time preſerves the body from thoſe accidents, by which its very exiſtence might otherwiſe be deſtroyed; *it is a garb*, which every wiſe man will be thankful to GOD for providing, and none but madmen will throw away.

To ſeparate the form of godlineſs, therefore, from the power of it, by placing the biſhop of the church in oppoſition to the collection of believers, by which you mean the government of the church in oppoſi-

tion to the doctrine of it; is unneceſſarily to put aſunder what GOD joined together, and thereby to lead your reader to a falſe concluſion upon a very important ſubject.

This mode of writing ſtrikes me as totally inappropriate to the ſubject to which it is applied; for it implies the denial of what is not denied. The importance of the doctrine of the church is not queſtioned, nor any compariſon between that and the government of it attempted. At the ſame time it is to be remembered, that obedience to ſpiritual governors conſtitutes a part, and a conſpicuous part, of that doctrine which the ſcripture expreſsly enjoins. It is fruitleſs, therefore, to enquire which of two acts of duty be the more acceptable, when both are enjoined by the ſame authority, and conſequently equally indiſpenſible; and certainly dangerous to form that compariſon between two indiſpenſible duties, which, by giving preference to the one, may tend to the depreciation of the other. But there is another ſtill manifeſt defect in this mode of writing, which thus appears to balance as it were one part of revelation againſt another, which is this; that it inſenſibly operates with the generality of readers, to the excluſion of obedience to eccleſiaſtical

government, from the number of practical duties. Whereas all duties that have been revealed, ought to be conſidered as of equal importance; becauſe, having been all enjoined by the ſame Divine authority, they all ſtand, in reference to Chriſtian practice, on the ſame ground of ſpiritual obligation.

"The *collection of believers*," you ſay, "is the *church* of the living GOD; and therefore the church of CHRIST, becauſe ſhe holds the truth." I ſhould rather ſay, that the church holds the truth, becauſe ſhe is the church of CHRIST; and the preſervation of that truth in the world is, under GOD, to be attributed to that eſtabliſhment, by which the church, as a ſociety, has been held together. You muſt excuſe me, therefore, if I cannot ſee the Divine eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church, under an appropriate government, in that unimportant point of view in which you appear to ſee it. I conceive, that without ſuch an eſtabliſhment no ſtandard of faith would have been found among Chriſtians; and the religion of CHRIST, without ſome conſtant ſupernatural power to preſerve it, would, long ere this, have been loſt to the world.

That the "ſpirituality of Divine worſhip" is eſſential to the *very being* and *conſtitution* of a church, is

more than will be granted; becauſe the church of CHRIST has, at different times, been permitted to exiſt without it. Had you ſaid, that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip was eſſential to the *perfection* of a church, you would have ſaid no more than what would have been univerſally admitted. But when you tell your reader, that the difference between the Jews and Samaritans reſpected only the *mode* and *place* of worſhip, you appear to have forgotten the important diſtinction between the temple at Jeruſalem and that at Samaria. The former was the temple of the living GOD, to which that at Samaria was ſet up in oppoſition. The Jews worſhipped at Jeruſalem the GOD of their fathers. The Samaritans, as our SAVIOUR told the woman, "worſhipped they knew not what." The Jews were in poſſeſſion of the temple, out of which no ſacrifice was to be offered; they therefore continued members of the church of the living GOD. The ten tribes, by ſetting up a temple independent of that at Jeruſalem, became thereby *ſchiſmatics*, and periſhed in conſequence of their ſeparation.

Had you adverted to the ſpeech made by AHIJAH to JEROBOAM, you would not have thought the caſe of the Samaritans the moſt applicable to your ſubject.

"Hear me, thou JEROBOAM, and all Iſrael. Have ye not caſt out the prieſts of the LORD, the ſons of AARON, and the Levites, and have made ye prieſts after the manner of the nations of other lands? So that whoſoever cometh to *conſecrate himſelf* with a young bullock and ſeven rams, the ſame may be a prieſt of them *that are no gods*. But as for us *the LORD is our GOD*, and we have not forſaken him; and the prieſts which miniſter unto the LORD are the ſons of AARON, and the Levites wait upon their buſineſs. And they burn unto the LORD, every morning and every evening, burnt ſacrifices and ſweet incenſe; the ſhew-bread alſo they ſet in order upon the pure table, and the candleſtick of gold with the lamps thereof, to burn every evening; for we keep the charge of the Lord our GOD, but *ye have forſaken him.*" 2 Chron. xiii. The application ſhall be left with yourſelf.

As I am now engaged in anſwering objections to poſitions that have been advanced in my writings, it may be expected that I ſhould not paſs over, without further notice, the pages immediately before the reader; although they have already furniſhed occaſion for particular diſcuſſion. Indiſpoſed as I am to keep alive a ſpirit of controverſy, which in this caſe appears

to promiſe no profit, and poſſeſſing at the ſame time a proper regard for every zealous ſervant of the LORD for his work's ſake, however I may differ from him in opinion; it is with concern that I have noticed a charge, to which, I flattered myſelf, a full reply had been made, again *indirectly* brought forward to the public. Had the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver (as the ſubject ſtrikes me) properly diſcharged their duty to the public, in their aſſumed character of reviewers, however juſtified they might conſider themſelves in the concluſion they had originally drawn from my language, they ſtill could not have perſiſted in making me reſponſible for a meaning, which, on my part, had been publicly and unequivocally diſavowed. The acknowledgment of inadvertency in this inſtance certainly would not have detracted ſo much from their credit as reviewers with all candid readers, as does the uncharitableneſs of the conſtruction, which they have attached to a part of my writings, appear to infringe on their ſtill more important character of Chriſtians. I ſay *uncharitableneſs* of conſtruction, becauſe I conceive it to be a principle of Chriſtian obligation, that, in all caſes, where the conſtruction attached to a paſſage in any writings does diſcredit to the writer, charity, which "hopeth all things," re-

quires its being withheld from the public, whilſt there is any fair reaſon to conclude, that it does not ſpeak the meaning intended to be conveyed by the paſſage in queſtion. How far the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have been governed by this principle, in the remarks they have paſſed on the part of my writings under immdiate conſideration, I am not the perſon, in ſome reſpects perhaps, the beſt qualified to judge. That I may detain my reader therefore as little as poſſible on a ſubject, which requires, it ſhould ſeem, but a moderate ſhare of diſcrimination perfectly to comprehend, I ſhall content myſelf with briefly ſtating particulars, leaving the judgment on them, as far as may be, to himſelf. In the Chriſtian Obſerver, for March 1802, the following paſſage is to be found. After having obſerved that "unbelievers have condemned, as abſurd and hypocritical, all regard for Chriſtianity, except as a mere *external* thing; that men of the world have *practically* denied all that is ſpiritual in religion; and that diſſenters, with a view to depreciate the eſtabliſhment, have inſinuated that our religion chiefly conſiſts in forms;" the editors proceed to ſay, "Mr. DAUBENY has maintained that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip is not *eſſential* to the being of the church of CHRIST." Having thus

pointed out the general notion relative to the Chriſtian religion being a religion more of form than of ſpirit, ſuppoſed to be entertained by the parties here brought before the public, the editors proceed to the formal proof of a poſition, which, it is preſumed, no intelligent member of the church ever meant to controvert, namely, that "GOD as a Spirit muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth;" and that (*mutatis mutandis*) the circumciſion of the heart, in the ſpirit and not in the letter, marks the character of the real Chriſtian, as it heretofore did that of the Jew; and conſequently, that "every other kind of religion but *ſpiritual* is not only defective but ruinous." To this general reaſoning on the ſubject under conſideration is ſubjoined the following expoſtulation with the parties, who appear to have given occaſion for its introduction. "When will theſe gentlemen (theſe profeſſed formaliſts, as they are here repreſented) learn, that 'He who made that which is without, made that alſo which is within?' When will they diſcover a proper concern for forms and ceremonies, without depreciating what it is the grand object of all external inſtitutions to produce, *real practical Chriſtianity?* When will they ſee the neceſſity of ſomething more than the mere outward union with CHRIST through the pro-

feſſion of his religion, which, as HOOKER expreſſes the matter, may leave them impious idolaters, wicked heretics, and imps and limbs of Satan? When will they be convinced, that no perſons can ſupport the character of true miniſters or members of the church of England, who do not equally reſpect her conſtitution and her doctrines?" As there is no exception made in this caſe, the foregoing expoſtulation, according to the uſual interpretation of language, muſt be conſidered as applied indiſcriminately to all the parties here arraigned for their ſpiritual deficiency. Mr. DAUBENY conſequently, as one of thoſe parties, ſtands accuſed, indirectly at leaſt, of not having "diſcovered a proper concern for forms and ceremonies, without depreciating real practical Chriſtianity;" and of not "ſeeing the neceſſity of ſomething more than mere outward union with CHRIST through the profeſſion of his religon;" or, as Mr. OVERTON has plainly expreſſed himſelf, of "treating all as real Chriſtians who aſſume the Chriſtian name, and comply with the external forms of our religion." OVERTON, p. 107. This charge, ſo far as I am concerned in it, the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have grounded on the following paſſage, originally delivered by them to the public, under the form of a quotation from my

writings. "Mr. DAUBENY," ſay they, "has maintained that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip is not *eſſential* to the being of the church of CHRIST." Now, ſhould an author profeſſing thoſe ſentiments relative to the conſtitution of the church, and the ſpiritual end to which alone it was deſigned to miniſter, which muſt prevail in the minds of all ſound members of it, be repreſented as an advocate for mere forms, a patronizer of that blind opinion, which muſt by degrees annihilate the very eſſence which the Divine inſtitution of a church was deſigned to preſerve and promote, by maintaining that ſalvation was attached to a nominal admiſſion into the number of its profeſſing members; in other words, that to be baptized into the church was to be ſaved by it; it would doubtleſs be concluded, that there muſt be either great want of perſpicuity on the part of ſuch author, or great want of diſcernment or candour on the part of the reader of his writings, to give occaſion to ſuch miſrepreſentation of his real ſentiments. The ſhort queſtion then on this occaſion is this—Is the ſenſe which the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have deduced from the paſſage under conſideration, that ſenſe which the author intended that it ſhould convey to his readers? Should this not be the caſe, to ſay, or

even to prove, that the paſſage in queſtion is capable of the ſenſe annexed to it by others, is foreign to the purpoſe; the author being anſwerable only for the ſentiment intended to be conveyed by himſelf. And admitting, on the ground of ſuch ſentiment not being ſtrictly deducible from the paſſage in queſtion, that objection might be made to the author's language; ſtill, in a court of equity, ſuch as *Chriſtian Obſervers* ſhould wiſh to eſtabliſh, it is to be preſumed that an author could not fail to be given credit for the ſentiment really meant to be conveyed, however defective he might have been in the mode of its conveyance. It was to be expected, therefore, that when ſuch ſentiment ſhould not only be unequivocally challenged by the author, but moreover fairly made out to be the only one conſiſtent with the object he had before him on the occaſion, common juſtice would have led the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver to an acknowledgment of the unfounded nature of their charge. With this view a letter was written to them, for the expreſs purpoſe of pointing out the train of reaſoning to which the objectionable paſſage in queſtion immediately referred: a circumſtance which could not fail to lead the intelligent reader to the meaning intended to be conveyed by it. The object the author profeſſedly

had before him, was declared to be that of counteracting a prevailing notion, that where the Goſpel is preached, there the church of CHRIST is to be found: "a notion, it was obſerved, which ſavoured ſtrongly of the old puritan doctrine of ſetting up the purity of the church againſt the eſtabliſhment of it, as if they were two things not to be found together." On this ground it was obſerved, that "a doctrine which cries up purity to the ruin of unity ought to be rejected, becauſe the Goſpel calls for unity as well as purity: and that placing the Biſhop in oppoſition to the collection of believers, or, as it was underſtood, the government of the church in oppoſition to the doctrine of it, was unneceſſarily to put aſunder what GOD had joined together." With the view of impreſſing the more ſtrongly on the reader's mind this idea relative to the purity of doctrine not being the *only* characteriſtic by which the church was to be known, and conſequently not the only ſubject neceſſary to be attended to in this caſe, the following ſentence was introduced: "that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip is eſſential to the *very being* and *conſtitution* of a church, is more than will be granted; becauſe the church of CHRIST has at different times been permitted to exiſt without it." If

the church has any time been permitted to exiſt in notorious corruption, (of which the world has had repeated proof) the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip cannot be eſſential to *its very being;* for in ſuch caſe the church could at no time have exiſted without it. The concluſion therefore evidently meant to be drawn from the ſentence in queſtion was, that purity of doctrine did not conſtitute that infallible criterion, by which *alone* the exiſtence of a church was to be determined. But whilſt I was guarding againſt the error of thoſe who attempted to ſeparate the purity of doctrine from the conſtitution of the church, by adopting the falſe notion, that where the Goſpel is preached there the church is to be found; equal care was at the ſame time taken to guard againſt the no leſs dangerous error of others, who ſuffer an adherence to the mere external conſtitution of the church to ſuperſede all attention to that ſpiritual work, for the ſole promotion of which the church was inſtituted. In a word, the object before me was, by keeping the means and the end, the outward polity and the internal purity of the church together, to render the Divine inſtitution moſt conducive to its intended purpoſe. With this view it was obſerved, "that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip, though not eſſential to

the *very being* and *conſtitution* of the church, is nevertheleſs eſſential to the *perfection* of it. It is that which is *principal* and *important* in the higheſt degree; that, without which the end for which the church has been eſtabliſhed, cannot, as far as the caſe applies, be effectually anſwered. Without it the church may exiſt in any place ſo long as it be the will of heaven that ſhe ſhould; but under ſuch circumſtances ſhe exiſts in corruption." A man may exiſt as a man, in ſuch a ſtate of diſeaſe as may almoſt incapacitate him for every vital function; but to anſwer every end of his creation, he muſt be in ſound health. "So far then from Chriſtianity being an external thing or a mere form," the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver were given to underſtand, that I conſidered the ſpirituality of it that thing of primary importance which the being of a church was deſigned to preſerve; "that *valuable kernel*, of which the conſtitution of the church was but the ſhell."

The foregoing language, calculated to leave no doubt on the minds of the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver with reſpect to the real ſentiments of its writer, was deſired to be laid before their readers, with the view that the miſrepreſentation of my writings might be corrected through the ſame channel

by which ſuch miſrepreſentations had been conveyed to the public. This deſire was not complied with. The only public effect which my letter to the editors produced, was that of drawing from them an acknowledgment, that the paſſage ſuppoſed to have been taken from my writings, on which their charge was grounded, was not to be underſtood as a quotation;* accompanied however with a declaration, that though the paſſage itſelf, as they had brought it before the public, was not to be found, that "they were ſtill of opinion that the repreſentation which they had given of my ſentiments was correct." The reader, perhaps, may think, that after thus wilfully perſiſting, in direct contradiction to the expreſs purpoſe of my letter, to make me ſpeak a language which I had expreſsly diſavowed, no further compliment was due from me to the Chriſtian Obſerver. A ſecond letter was however written, the object of which was to convince the editors of that miſcellany, that the author, whom they had miſrepreſented, conſidered himſelf to be in perfect uniſon with

* The paſſage marked on this occaſion as a quotation from my writings, and maintained as containing a correct ſtatement of my ſentiments, was in fact ſo mutilated by the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver, as to keep the preciſe meaning of its author out of ſight.

themſelves on the ſubject in queſtion. With this view, after having briefly recapitulated the eſſence of my former letter, I concluded by telling them, in their *own words*, that "every kind of religion but *ſpiritual* was defective and ruinous;" at the ſame time requeſting, that ſhould any part of my writings be found, which would authorize that repreſentation of my ſentiments which they had given to the publlic, it might be pointed out, for the purpoſe of furniſhing me with an opportunity of publicly and effectually counteracting the prevalence of ſuch moſt fatal deluſion. No author, it is preſumed, could ſhew himſelf more open to conviction, or more deſirous of treading back his ground; as I truſt I ever ſhall be, when it can be fairly made appear that I have trodden amiſs. In anſwer to this ſecond letter the editors write thus: "Wiſhing to furniſh Mr. D. with the opportunity he requeſts of publicly and effectually counteracting the prevalence of that moſt fatal deluſion, into which his unguarded language may have been inſtrumental in leading *his* readers, we fully intended, even before we were favoured with his ſecond letter, to lay his explanation upon the ſubject before the public." And then follows the ſubſtance of the explanation, as contained in my firſt letter. Mr. D. acknowledges no

unguarded language on his part calculated to lead his readers into any fatal deluſion, but language deſigned for the expreſs counteraction of a dangerous error. Had the editors, therefore, inſtead of inducing the public to conclude that *my unguarded language* in the paſſage under conſideration might have been inſtrumental in leading *my* readers into fatal deluſion, fairly acknowledged, as candid critics, that on turning to the paſſage in queſtion they felt themſelves called upon to reſtore to Mr. D. his own words, by the omiſſion of which they had led *their* readers into a miſconception of his meaning; and that they were ſatisfied that Mr. D.'s words, when taken with their context, ſpake a language ſufficiently intelligible; they would have done juſtice to the author, and at the ſame time credit to themſelves. Their not doing ſo called upon me, in ſelf-juſtification, to bring the ſubject more fully before the public, in the form of a pamphlet.* In their anſwer to correſpondents in their September number of 1802, the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver take notice of this pamphlet; and after paſſing ſome few remarks which do not immediately apply, they proceed to the defence of the ground, which they conſider themſelves as having taken on this occaſion.

* Entitled, "A Letter to a ſound Member of the Church."

"It will be recollected," they ſay, "that the obnoxious paſſage, although admitted not to be a quotation, was affirmed to be *a correct repreſentation of the ſentiments of the author*. To this opinion we ſtill adhere." On the ground of this obnoxious paſſage, the editors had repreſented Mr. D. as depreciating real practical Chriſtianity, and maintaining the deluſive poſition, that nothing more than *mere outward union with* CHRIST, through the profeſſion of his religion, is neceſſary. The queſtion then is, were theſe the ſentiments which the writer of the paſſage in queſtion intended to convey to his readers. The writer himſelf, who, it is preſumed, muſt beſt know his own meaning, has expreſsly and unequivocally declared that they were not; on the contrary, that he poſſeſſes ſentiments in moſt direct oppoſition to thoſe with which he has been made chargeable: conſequently, the repreſentation of his ſentiments given by the Chriſtian Obſerver, admitting an author to be the competent explainer of his own meaning, *was not correct*. But the editors proceed; "Now although we do not pretend to affirm, that purity of doctrine, or ſpirituality of worſhip conſtitutes the *only* characteriſtic of the viſible church, we make no heſitation, in conformity with our previous declaration, and in oppo-

ſition to Mr. D., to aſſert, that it is eſſential to the very being and conſtitution of the viſible church—in ſuch a ſenſe eſſential, that *without it the viſible church could not exiſt as ſuch.* This is the point at iſſue between Mr. D. and the Chriſtian Obſerver."

The point at iſſue between the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver and Mr. D. appears to me to be this; whether the repreſentation they have given of Mr. D.'s ſentiments, on the ground of the paſſage in queſtion, *has been correct.* To ſay that the point at iſſue is, whether the ſpirituality of worſhip is eſſential to the very being of a church, "in that ſenſe, that without it the viſible church could not exiſt as ſuch," is to ſhift the ground, and to divert the attention of their readers, from their own continued miſrepreſentation of my declared ſentiments, to the conſideration of a new queſtion; namely, whether the language made uſe of by Mr. D. on this occaſion, for the conveyance of his ſentiments, muſt neceſſarily convey that meaning, and *that only*, which the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have deduced from it. Suppoſing, therefore, the arguments which the editors have brought forward to eſtabliſh the ground they here profeſs to take, were in themſelves valid, (which is by no means admitted) they have nothing to do with the real

point at iſſue. The object I had expreſsly in view, as my language demonſtrates, was to guard againſt that error which the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver themſelves diſclaim; namely, that of conſidering ſpirituality of worſhip as the *only* characteriſtic of the church. Thus agreed in the eſſential part of the ſubject, being indiſpoſed for cavil, I was ſorry that a diſpute about words ſhould be kept alive between members of the ſame church, who might be ſuppoſed to have the promotion of the ſame cauſe at heart. Having therefore delivered my ſentiments to the public in language ſufficiently plain to render, I flattered myſelf, all future miſrepreſentation of them on the ſubject in queſtion impracticable, I purpoſely ſhut up the chapter.

After ſuch pains taken on my part to do away the falſe impreſſion, which my language appeared to have left on the minds of the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver, my reader will perhaps be ſurpriſed to find, that I ſhould fail to gain the leaſt ground in their opinion. Such ſeems, however, to be the caſe: for in their number for January, 1803, I am indirectly made reſponſible for a ſentiment ſimilar to that, for the diſavowal of which I had expreſsly written ſo many pages. My name, indeed, is kept out of

ſight; but a paſſage from my writings is taken for the purpoſe of bringing forward the authority of the late Mr. JONES againſt me, on the ſubject under conſideration. "It has been aſſerted, (ſay the editors) by a writer of no mean name in the preſent day, that he is but a ſcioliſt in theology who has yet to learn, "that may be a true church, in which the pure word of GOD is not preached."* "The opinion of Mr. JONES on this ſubject (continue the editors) may have weight with many; it is as follows: 'The church has been governed by biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, from the Apoſtles downwards; and where we find theſe orders duly appointed, *the word preached*, and the ſacraments adminiſtered, there we find the church of CHRIST, with its form and authority." If this general definition of a church, in conformity with the Nineteenth Article, has proved to the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver, that the poſition brought forward from my writings is in hoſtility with it, it has certainly proved more than Mr. JONES meant that it ſhould prove. For Mr. JONES poſſeſſed diſcrimination of mind to underſtand my language on this occaſion, and ſaw no difference of opinion on the ſubject under conſideration between

* See Appendix, Letter VI. p. 304.

us: and though it would be improper for me to report all that Mr. JONES did ſay on that publication, which the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have taken pains to depreciate, I muſt conſider it to be the ſtrongeſt proof of the ſterling character of its contents, that it furniſhed moſt ſatisfactory employment to the mind of ſuch a divine as Mr. JONES, in the lateſt ſtage of his life.

Whilſt I have the beſt authority for affirming, that the explanation of my meaning, in the paſſage under conſideration, contained in the following words, (namely) "that ſpiritual worſhip, taken abſtractedly, was not the *ſine quâ non*, when conſidered with reference to the *exiſtence* of a church; by that alone, conſequently, the exiſtence of a church could not be decidedly aſcertained; at the ſame time that it was the *ſine quâ non valet*, with reference to the deſign of it; in other words, it was that eſſential characteriſtic, without which the church could not anſwer the end of its Divine inſtitution;"* is an explanation to which the late Mr. JONES would moſt unequivocally have ſubſcribed.

Having thus ſaid all that is neceſſary for the information of my reader on this ſubject, I leave the

* See "Letter to a ſound Member of the Church," p. 35.—RIVINGTONS.

judgment with himſelf; obſerving only, that ſhould the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver have a good reaſon to give, for their determined perſeverance in aſcribing ſentiments to the author of "a Guide to the Church," which he has unequivocally diſavowed, and which are calculated, ſo far at leaſt as their credit extends, to lower the character of a miniſter of that church, of which they profeſs themſelves members; they will not fail to give it. At the ſame time I would aſk, in the language of an amiable and able divine,* "what courſe can they take, who love and eſteem every zealous ſervant of the LORD for his works' ſake, and are ready to bear with ſuch as differ from them, to rejoice in all the good they do, and to concur with them in the joint labours of the ſame miniſtry, but are unwilling to be caſt out from all part and lot in the matter for the ſake only of ſuch differences? Muſt they ſit ſtill, when every effort is made (by depreciating their inſtructions) to withdraw the hearts of thoſe committed to their paſtoral care? Muſt they ſilently permit themſelves to be held out to the world as men, who are either ignorant of Goſpel truths, or averſe from all ſound doctrine?"

* Archdeacon POTT, "Conſiderations on the Chriſtian Covenant." Page 61.

Inſtead of multiplying proof on this ſubject, for the purpoſe of convincing my reader, that the diſtinction between a *true* church and a *pure* one has been a diſtinction maintained by ſome of the ſoundeſt and moſt eminent divines of the proteſtant church, I ſhall confine myſelf to the authority of Biſhop HALL; in the confidence, that the known piety of his character will ſecure me againſt all miſinterpretation of thoſe ſentiments on this ſubject, which I have the ſatisfaction to know were the ſentiments of that truly ſpiritual man. The deſign of his apologetical advertiſement, prefixed to "The Reconciler," is evidently to point out the neceſſary diſtinction between the *true viſibility* of a church, and the *ſoundneſs* of it. This the biſhop has exemplified in the caſe of the church of Rome, which he maintains, with JUNIUS, to be a *truly living* (though ſick) church. "The Popiſh church, (ſaith he) in that it hath in it that which pertains to the definition of a church, is a church. In the church of Rome then," concludes the Biſhop, "*a true viſibility* may and doth ſtand with a *falſe* belief;" a poſition in direct contradiction with that laid down by the editors of the Chriſtian Obſerver in the following deciſive words; "that purity of doctrine is in ſuch a ſenſe eſſential to the

very being and conſtitution of the viſible church, that *without it the viſible church could not exiſt as ſuch.*" The ſcale of judgment is in the hand of the reader. To direct his deciſion, I ſhall leave only one remark on his mind, which, it is preſumed, muſt have preſented itſelf to him, on this unneceſſarily controverted ſubject, which is this; that the diſtinction here made between a *true* church and a *pure* one ought not to give offence to any ſound members of the church; becauſe it is evidently not intended to depreciate the eſſential importance of ſpiritual worſhip, which conſtitutes the perfection of a church, and without which the end of its inſtitution cannot be effectually anſwered; but to guard againſt that plauſible but dangerous error, which leads ſome Chriſtians to conclude, that purity of doctrine ſuperſedes the neceſſity of attention being paid to all other eccleſiaſtic diſtinctions. Thus, to conclude on this head, with the pious Biſhop immediately before me,* " in a deſire to ſtand but ſo right as I am in all honeſt judgments, I have made this ſpeedy and true apology; beſeeching all readers, in the fear of GOD, to judge wiſely and uprightly of what I have written; in a word, to do me but juſtice

* Biſhop HALL's Works, tom. ii. page 423.

in their opinions, and when I beg it, favour. And may GOD make us wiſe and charitable."

I ſhould not think it neceſſary to enlarge further upon this part of my ſubject, were there not ſuch pains taken, and ſuch means employed, to render the government of the church, of which you profeſs yourſelf to be a member, a matter of inſignificance, as are calculated to impoſe upon the uninformed reader. You are pleaſed to ſay, that it was "the decided opinion of every man of our church, who has been at all diſtinguiſhed for piety and learning, that the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip was eſſential to the very being and conſtitution of the church, and that the form of eccleſiaſtical government is altogether of ſecondary and inferior conſideration; and that you have fullyproved this in the courſe of your Letters." Page 189.

Taking this poſition in its proper and limited ſenſe, there might be no difference of opinion upon it. But if by this we are to underſtand, as according to the tenour of your book it is to be concluded, that all theſe diſtinguiſhed men of our church thought that it was a matter of indifference, ſo long as the ſpirituality of Divine worſhip was kept up, whether Chriſtians conformed to the eſtabliſhed church of

their country or not; and that the difference between the church and meeting-houſe was only a difference of *mode* and *place* of worſhip; I will venture to ſay, that you have not only not proved any ſuch thing, but that it is not in your power to prove it. I will ſay further, that the diſtinguiſhed men of our church were decidedly of a quite different opinion upon the ſubject of church communion, from what you would repreſent them to have been; and if they were alive to ſpeak for themſelves, they would tell you, that they never ſaw the ſubject in the light, in which the reader is given to underſtand they did ſee it: and I am perfectly ſatisfied that Biſhop REYNOLDS, whom you will allow to be both a pious and learned man, ſhall be the ſpokeſman for the whole body.

With reſpect to the judicious HOOKER, to whom you refer me, I have read him, probably, with as much attention as yourſelf; but I have never been able to find that meaning, which you appear to have drawn from him. HOOKER's excellent book, if I underſtand it, was written, as he himſelf ſays, page 2, "to maintain things that were eſtabliſhed, againſt thoſe who wanted to unſettle them;" an object (I am ſorry to ſay it) the very oppoſite to that which ſome

modern publications ſeem calculated to promote: What he ſays, therefore, on the ſubject of *church government*, reſpects the government of the church of England: and when he ſays, no one certain form is neceſſary to be eſtabliſhed in all churches, he in fact means only, what our Twentieth Article was deſigned to expreſs, that every church has a right to decree its own rites and ceremonies; in other words, to ſettle its own form of eccleſiaſtical polity. But this applies to eſtabliſhed *national* churches, conſidered as independent of each other, ſo far as reſpects their particular forms of regimen. In extending HOOKER's meaning, ſo far as to make it applicable to thoſe ſocieties of Chriſtians, which have *broken away* from the national church, by conſidering them as ſo many churches under their reſpective forms of government; you make uſe of his evidence for the promotion of an object, the very oppoſite to that which he had in view in delivering it; and thus convert a moſt powerful advocate for conformity to the church of England, into a countenancer of wilful ſeparation from it.

I ſhall trouble you with only a few additional obſervations on this head, before I paſs on. You mention the *gentle* and *Catholic* ſpirit of the church

of England; in oppoſition to which you ſeem to place, page 121, the *bigotry* and *intolerance* of thoſe who venture to ſay any thing upon the ſubject of ſchiſm. This is not a more groſs miſrepreſentation than that by which your reader is given to underſtand, that thoſe who plead for conformity to the church lay down this poſition, that there is no ſalvation out of the pale of the church of England. Page 196.

When a man proves too much, it is generally conſidered that he has proved nothing. Without making any anſwer, then, to this extravagant poſition, I ſhall only beg to remind you, that the church of England *does not tolerate ſchiſm;* ſhe both prays againſt it, and denounces ſentence againſt it. Her miniſters, conſequently, are bound to preach againſt it: and were they, with the view of converting ſchiſmatics, to prove that ſchiſm is as damning a ſin as murder or adultery, they would not, in ſo doing, poſſeſs one jot more of the ſpirit of *bigotry* and *intolerance*, than ST. CYPRIAN and ST. AUGUSTINE, and all the ancient fathers of the church, poſſeſſed, who uniformly inſiſted upon that argument.

The church of England, it is true, is both of a gentle and Catholic ſpirit, but not in the ſenſe in which

this is too often underſtood. She poſſeſſes abundance of moderation and charity towards all who ſeparate from her. She prays for them, at the ſame time that ſhe condemns them. She does not conſider ſocieties of Chriſtians ſeparated from her communion in the light in which you ſee them, "as churches of the LORD's vineyard," (page 157) but as conventicles of ſchiſmatics. In that character ſhe prays for them, as perſons "that have erred and are deceived, that they may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in *unity* of ſpirit and in the bond of peace." And next to praying for perſons who have erred and are deceived, is an honeſt endeavour to make them ſee the danger of their ſituation. If this be done with an earneſt deſire for their welfare, and in a ſpirit of meekneſs, with a wiſh to reſtore peace rather than to break and diſturb it, ſuch an endeavour appears to deſerve a repreſentation very different from that which you have annexed to it. For the object in view, you muſt know, can be no other than to promote that charity, which is the grand characteriſtic of the true Chriſtian; that being of one accord and of one mind, (Phil. ii. 2) Chriſtians may join together in the ſame acts of religious worſhip, as brethren of the ſame LORD: remembering, that if faith and

hope are unproductive of charity, they will never qualify a Chriſtian for heaven.

It ſhall be allowed, indeed, that provided the great object of the Chriſtian revelation is attained in the promotion of GOD's honour, and man's ſalvation, it becomes a matter of trifling conſideration, what different plans are adopted for carrying that object into effect. But I have been always taught to think, that the ſureſt way to gain the end, is to adopt the means appointed for the purpoſe. Had not the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church been thought neceſſary, it never would have received the ſanction of Divine authority. Having received that ſanction, it becomes the duty of man to conform to it: and there can be no doubt but the cauſe of Chriſtianity will proſper, in proportion to the attention paid to the plan ſet on foot by Divine wiſdom for its promotion.

But men are ever apt to conclude that to be right, which ſeemeth to be ſo in their own eyes; and it is not without conſiderable difficulty that they can be perſuaded to the contrary. Nevertheleſs, as in religious matters men cannot err in judgment without hazard to their ſouls, it becomes neceſſary that pains ſhould be taken to enable them to ſee their own blindneſs; and the eye-ſalve, mentioned in the Reve-

lations iii. 18, applied to their eyes, that *that* may ſeem to them right, which is *really* ſo.

You ſay, page 197, that you "diſapprove of ſelf-conſtituted authority and ſelf-ordination as much as I can." But is not your attendance on the miniſtrations of ſelf-ordained men, or at leaſt of men not ordained as GOD has appointed, and the whole tenour, as well as manner, of your writing, calculated to promote both? Provided ſound doctrine be preached, it ſeems to be no matter of conſideration with you by whom it is preached. Thoſe ſocieties of Chriſtians, which are ſeparated from the communion of the church in this country, you call *churches;* conſequently thoſe who officiate in them muſt be miniſters of the church. But no man taketh the honour of being a miniſter of CHRIST's church upon himſelf. He muſt receive a regular appointment to it from thoſe, through whoſe hands the evangelical commiſſion has been conveyed down to us. This poſition, you, who conſider the church of England to be an Apoſtolic church, (page 5) by which, I preſume, is to be underſtood, a church eſtabliſhed upon the Apoſtolic plan, muſt admit. ST. PAUL, ſpeaking in the character of a miniſter of the Goſpel, ſays, "we are ambaſſadors for CHRIST." Now the eſſence of an

ambaſſador's office conſiſts in his having received a commiſſion from the party he repreſents.

You are perſuaded, you ſay, page 208, that the ſin of KORAH, DATHAN, ABIRAM, and UZZAH, concurs in all thoſe who raſhly and unadviſedly take upon them the cure of immortal ſouls, having no other commiſſion but what they receive from the hands of men, without the inward call of the Holy Ghoſt.

KORAH's ſin conſiſted in his heading an inſurrection againſt the eſtabliſhed order of the church. UZZAH was puniſhed by GOD for his error; and his error, Biſhop PATRICK ſays, "conſiſted, firſt, in not carrying, as a Levite, the ark upon his ſhoulders with his brethren; and ſecondly, in touching it, which he ought not ſo much as to have ſeen, it being covered by the prieſts: the Levites were to take hold of the ſtaves, and carry it." See PATRICK on Sam. chap. vi. 7. The reader, therefore, muſt be perſuaded, that there is not the leaſt analogy between the caſes; and conſequently that your compariſon has nothing to do with the preſent ſubject.

Let us proceed then. You ſubjoin to your compariſon the excellent prayer of our church, which proves all that I want to have proved; that, according to the eſtabliſhed plan of the Apoſtolic church,

there is power regularly lodged with the biſhops and paſtors of the church, to give authority to fit perſons to ſerve in the miniſtry of it. Authority and ordination therefore, not derived from this ſource, muſt be conſidered as *ſelf-conſtituted*.

You may be acquainted with many ſpiritual perſons fully qualified for that office in the miniſtry which they undertake; and there are doubtleſs many ſpiritual perſons much better qualified for the office, than ſome of thoſe who do undertake it; nevertheleſs without a regular appointment they are not authoriſed to act in it. You may think yourſelf better qualified to diſcharge the office of an ambaſſador for the King of Great-Britain, than ſome who are employed in that office: but the act of the ambaſſador, though your inferior in diplomatic talents, will be *valid*; whilſt that of the ſelf-conſtituted miniſter will be conſidered as an act of rebellion. Now to me it appears to be a matter of ſtill greater importance, that the commiſſion of the party, whoſe office it is to treat with me as a ſinner in GOD's name, to whom the miniſtry of reconciliation between GOD and man has been committed for that purpoſe, ſhould be *authentic*, than that that commiſſion ſhould be ſo, which reſpects only the adjuſtment of temporal concerns.

The commiſſion delivered to the miniſters of CHRIST's church is of a very important nature: it is to be found in the ſixteenth chapter of ST. MATTHEW, and the nineteenth verſe. I preſume, Sir, you admit that ſuch words cannot be words of inſignificance. The power of remitting ſins is originally in GOD, and GOD alone. But this power our SAVIOUR, by virtue of his incarnate divinity, alſo exerciſed: "The Son of Man hath power to forgive ſins upon earth." MATT. ii. 10. This power, thus ſolely inveſted in GOD, he might have retained to himſelf, and without the means either of word, ſacraments, or miniſters, have exerciſed *immediately by himſelf* in heaven. "But (as Biſhop ANDREWS obſerves, Sermon on John xx. 23) becauſe CHRIST, to whom this commiſſion was originally granted, having ordained himſelf a *body*, would work by bodily things; and having taken the nature of a man upon him, would honour the nature he had ſo taken; for theſe cauſes, that which was his, and his alone, he vouchſafed to impart; and out of his commiſſion to grant a commiſſion, and thereby to *aſſociate them to himſelf*, (it is his own word by the prophet) and to make them συνεργους, that is, workers together with him, (as the

Apoſtle ſpeaketh, 2 Cor. vi. 1) to the work of ſalvation, both of themſelves and others."

Now in the diſcharge of his commiſſion, our SAVIOUR, as man, did not proceed without an outward and viſible appointment; "for no man (ſays the Apoſtle, Heb. v. 4) taketh this honour (of acting between GOD and man) to himſelf, but he that was called of GOD, as was AARON." You can have no doubt of our SAVIOUR being in poſſeſſion of the *inward* call of which you ſpeak; for we are told he received the ſpirit without meaſure: ſtill he thought it neceſſary, and, probably, for an example to thoſe who were to ſucceed him in his commiſſion, that the *outward* call and appointment ſhould alſo be added to his *inward* qualification for it. And in the church, as a *viſible* ſociety, a *viſible* appointment of officers is eſſential, that the members of the ſociety may know who are the perſons appointed to manage the affairs of it.

An attempt, therefore, to diſtinguiſh between the *inward* call and *outward* appointment to the miniſtry, by which you lead the reader to conclude, that the *one* may qualify for the diſcharge of the evangelical commiſſion *without the other*, is to ſeparate what GOD for wiſe reaſons has joined together, and thereby to

introduce diſorder and confuſion into a work, which the Head of the church deſigned ſhould be regularly carried on for the benefit of mankind.

For, give me leave to aſk what is to be done in this caſe? If the ſtandard of judgment, by the regular appointment of miniſters for the ſervice of the church, be ſet aſide, what other ſhall we adopt upon which the member of the church can place dependence? The *inward* call of the Holy Ghoſt is an *inviſible* thing, of which we can form no judgment. It may be leaſt found where it is moſt pretended to exiſt. We know that this has been the caſe. As the gift, therefore, which qualified the party to try the ſpirits, is no longer poſſeſſed by the church, if no other qualification for the diſcharge of the miniſtry, but the pretenſion of the officiating miniſter, be required, much miſchief may be done in the Chriſtian world before the cheat may be diſcovered; for in this caſe there is no drawing a line. It is impoſſible for any man who breaks away from the regular and appointed order of the church, to ſay,—thus far will I go, and no further. Error knows no bounds. He that has once ſtepped beyond the threſhold of the church, ſeldom ſtops till he gets quite out of the church-yard, and then he may be carried he knows

not whither. If the *inward* call of the Holy Ghoſt be admitted in one caſe as a ſufficient qualification for the miniſtry, it muſt be admitted in all, for we cannot diſcriminate: and what muſt be the conſequence? Even what is now experienced among us. Pariſhioners are drawn away from their appointed paſtors; and under the plauſible idea of hearing the Goſpel in greater purity, both the ſenſe and ſpirit of it are in a fair way of being loſt among them. For if the "blind lead the blind," we are told, "they ſhall both fall into the ditch."

It is not to be expected, Sir, that you ſhould know ſo much of the ſtate of religion among the lower ranks of people, as one who has lived in a pariſh and in a country abounding with ſectariſts of every denomination. I have marked and lamented the progreſs of ſeparation from the church for twenty years; and I am inclined to think, that no zeal of the regular miniſter will ever counteract the effect of prejudice on the minds of ignorant people once ſet a roving. In a little tract lately publiſhed, entitled "An Appeal to the people," by a clergyman of the dioceſe of Saliſbury, there is the following extraordinary information, in a note, page 17; "that from the city of Saliſbury alone there iſſues forth on the ſabbath no leſs a

number than between fifty and ſixty diſſenting preachers, ſome perhaps licenſed, many not licenſed; ſelf-inſtructed, ſelf-ordained; employed on common days in the various capacities of *taylors*, *cabinet-makers*, *ſhoe-makers*, *coblers*, *bakers*, *blackſmiths*," &c. The prophet tells us, that "the lips of the prieſt ſhould keep knowledge, and that the people ſhould ſeek the law from his mouth, for he is the meſſenger of the LORD of hoſts." MAL. ii. 7.

Can you, Sir, ſee the ignorant itinerant preachers above-mentioned in the character of meſſengers of the LORD of hoſts? In a word, can you think, that the end for which the Goſpel was publiſhed, namely, that men might be brought out of darkneſs into light, is likely to be effected by ſuch unpromiſing means?

Whilſt you are holding up your hand againſt ſuch a proſtitution of the ſacred office, permit me to remind you, that the effect of the principles contained in your book, when puſhed home to their conſequences, will be no other than what is above deſcribed. And there is not the wildeſt itinerant preacher who talks about the inward gift of the Spirit, and preaches blaſphemy and ſedition, who may not plead the authority of your writings for the validity of his ſuppoſed miniſterial commiſſion.

You would not wiſh, I am well aware, that your principles ſhould be thus abuſed; but the only way to guard againſt the abuſe of principles, is to avoid, as much as may be, the laying down ſuch as are obnoxious to it. What you have written relative to what you underſtand by the eſſentials and circumſtantials of religion, appears to me liable to much abuſe. It is calculated to put looſe ideas in the heads of Chriſtians upon church matters, and thereby to do more injury to the cauſe of religion than either you or I may perhaps be able to foreſee. It tends to derange and unſettle that plan which the Founder of the church laid down for the ſalvation of its members, by the miniſtry of reconciliation committed to his appointed ambaſſadors. This, as the ſubject ſtrikes me at leaſt, is to make ourſelves wiſer than GOD, by imagining, as many modern Chriſtians are apt to do, that the eſſence of CHRIST's religion may be preſerved in the world, unaccompanied with thoſe important circumſtantials of order and government which were eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe. An imagination of a moſt dangerous kind; becauſe it tends to deprive Chriſtians of thoſe means of grace which never would have been inſtituted, had it been thought that the ſalvation of fallen man could have been worked out

as well without thoſe means as with them. "I dare not diſmember myſelf from that church that holds the Head. I think, whilſt doctrine is for the main ſound, CHRIST ſtays with a church, and it is good to ſtay where he ſtays. I would follow him, and not lead him, or go before the Lamb." ENGLAND's Remembrancer, ſerm. 16. Truſting that my meaning will not be miſinterpreted, and that what I have ſaid will be taken in good part by a member of the Apoſtolic church, when conſidered as coming from a miniſter of it, I paſs on, to place this important ſubject before you in a different point of view.

As a member of the legiſlature, you are, by your engagement to the public, bound to preſerve and ſupport that conſtitution, which is the glory and happineſs of this country: ſuch I conceive to be the great truſt which has been committed to every repreſentative of the community. The eccleſiaſtical eſtate conſtitutes one of the three eſtates which compoſe the legiſlative government of this kingdom. This eſtate is no where properly repreſented, but in its own Houſe of Parliament. The continued prorogation of that Houſe, though it has altered the practice, makes no alteration in the theory of our conſtitution. The doctrine which makes the King one of the three eſtates of

this realm, is a doctrine unknown to our ſober anceſtors, and contradictory to the plain letter of our ſtatute-book; it is the invention of diſcontented demagogues, whoſe object it is to raiſe, what is abſurdly called, the *majeſty of the people* upon the ruins of that of the ſovereign; an object which, if not counteracted, muſt ultimately terminate in anarchy and confuſion.

In ſubmitting then to the ſuſpenſion of its appropriate rights, the eccleſiaſtical eſtate muſt not be conſidered as ſubſcribing to a wild doctrine which threatens deſtruction to all eſtabliſhed order, but as confiding in the honour and juſtice of the other branches of the legiſlature; and it is on a due regard being paid to this honorary obligation, that the preſervation of our conſtitution depends.

This is a conſideration which does not, it is preſumed, preſent itſelf to thoſe members of the Britiſh Parliament, who, in conſequence of the eccleſiaſtical eſtate being, as it were, merged in the other branches of the legiſlature, think themſelves inveſted with more general powers, than, according to the conſtitution of this country, it was deſigned they ſhould poſſeſs. Whereas it ſhould be remembered, that the perfection of our boaſted conſtitution conſiſts in its affording

equal protection to the rights of every order of which the national ſociety is compoſed.

Now experience has ſhewn us, that the preſervation of the eccleſiaſtical part of our conſtitution is eſſential to the ſecurity of the civil part of it; and that no attempt has ever been made upon the *former*, but with a view to the ultimate deſtruction of the *latter*. At the ſame time it is to be remembered, that we now live in a revolutionary age, in which no action or opinion which may, either in immediate or remote conſequence, in any degree affect our political exiſtence, can be unimportant. Every plan, therefore, that tends to introduce change in our eſtabliſhed ſyſtem, ſhould be carefully watched. Credit ſhould not be readily given to apparent good, nor ſhould even preſent evil be haſtily corrected. All circumſtances ſhould be weighed, and all poſſible conſequences conſidered, before any important changes are attempted. But it ſeldom happens that reformers are diſpoſed for theſe things. They are, generally ſpeaking, too ſanguine to ſpend time in deliberation, and too ſelf-opiniated to doubt the ſucceſs of any means they may think fit to employ.

At a time then, when every eſtabliſhed idea of government, every ſettled maxim of political expe-

rience, is, as it were, overwhelmed and borne down by this prevailing axiom, that *whatever is is wrong*; it becomes neceſſary that we be on our guard, and watch with holy vigilance over that conſtitution which has been committed by our anceſtors, as a ſacred depoſit, to our charge. Good and well-meaning men are not always wiſe men; their ſchemes may be ruinous, whilſt their intentions are honeſt; but wicked and deſigning men, (of whom, generally ſpeaking, there is much the greater number to be found among thoſe who are given to change) however fair their pretences, are never to be truſted.

A plan long projected, which has for its baſis the deſtruction of the Chriſtian religion, and all the eſtabliſhed orders of ſociety, has ſometime ſince been brought to an alarming degree of maturity. We have marked, and lamented over, its deſolating effects, though we have been hitherto wiſe enough in this country to guard againſt them. To the ſteady and uniform reſiſtance that has been made to thoſe wild doctrines of theoretical equality but practical diſorder, we owe, under GOD, the bleſſing and diſtinguiſhed honour of being looked up to as the guardians of the liberty of mankind, and the preſervers of all ſettled order and government in the world. The manly

policy of this country has now, for many years, raiſed almoſt the only bulwark againſt that torrent of diſorganization which threatens the overthrow of every thing valuable in ſociety, which it is the object of the preſent ſyſtem of France to accompliſh. That anti-Chriſtian and anti-monarchical revolutionary plan, which has carried deſolation into every country where its baneful influence has prevailed, failed not to meet with an enthuſiaſtic reception among a people prepared by corruption for it, and in a country unpoſſeſſed of either ſound religion or rational liberty to oppoſe its progreſs.

With us, thanks be to GOD, the caſe is ſomewhat different. The ſeeds of a revolutionary principle, it is true, were never more induſtriouſly diſſeminated among us than they have been of late years. But the means of promoting their growth in this country muſt be different from thoſe which have been ſucceſsfully employed in a neighbouring kingdom. The blaſphemous doctrine, that "*Chriſtianity is a religious impoſture, to which wiſe men will no longer be dupes,*" which paved the way to the overthrow of the altar and the throne of France, will make but few converts in a country, where the great body of the

people at leaſt are *Chriſtians*. On this account it is, that every attempt to deprive mankind of that hope and comfort to be derived from Chriſtianity, has, among the lower orders of the community, produced but very partial and very temporary effects: for thoſe who are not in the actual poſſeſſion of the vital ſpirit of CHRIST's religion, have ſtill that degree of attachment to it, that makes them revolt againſt an open attack upon its eſtabliſhed truths; the object of which is to deprive them of thoſe benefits, which, if not at preſent felt, may, they are perſuaded, be derived from the Chriſtian profeſſion.

It is not, therefore, by the *abolition* of the Chriſtian religion, that a revolution in this country will be attempted; for the people are not, if we may ſo ſay, ſufficiently *philoſophized* for that experiment; but by making religion become again, what it once has been made, an inſtrument in the buſineſs.

No cheat is ſo ſucceſsfully practiſed, as that which is clothed in a religious garb; becauſe ſome of the beſt, though not the moſt judicious, men are thereby induced to give their ſanction to it. Many, doubtleſs, of the puritans, in the laſt century, were well-meaning and pious Chriſtians; but the ſeparation from our church, occaſioned by their religious prejudices, pro-

ved, under the management of deſigning men, the ſource of ruin to our conſtitution.

To perſuade the people, that the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of their country ſtands in need of further reformation, that the doctrine of CHRIST's religion is not to be found in that purity in the church as it is out of it, and that the clergy are inſufficient to their important charge, is, by alienating their minds from the preſent order of things, to prepare them for a change: and when the minds of the people in any country are prepared for a change, we know that opportunity only is wanting to effect it.

It ſhall be readily granted, that the object you have in view, is moſt important. The ſame we muſt in charity ſuppoſe, was the object which many of the puritans had in view, in their deſire to raiſe the national religion up to what they conceived to be a purer ſtandard. We have ſeen the effect of their proceedings; and with this effect before our eyes, it becomes a queſtion of political prudence, whether we ſhould ſubject the conſtitution of our country to the hazard of a ſimilar experiment. It may be ſubmitted, therefore, to your ſerious conſideration, whether the means you are taking for promoting the cauſe of re-

ligion are the beſt calculated for the purpoſe, or ſuch as a guardian of the conſtitution ought to adopt.

The eſtabliſhed church of this country has been called the *eye of the reformation*, in conſequence of its having beſt provided for the ſecurity and perfection of the Chriſtian religion; and it will be found, I believe, that error has, in a greater or leſs degree, been the conſequence of ſeparation from it. You, Sir, profeſs yourſelf a member of this church, at the ſame time your manner of writing is calculated to promote ſeparation from it: for, by introducing vague definitions of a church, in conſequence of an ill-judged confuſion of its diſtinct character as an *inviſible* and *viſible* ſociety, you have left that incorrect idea upon the reader's mind, which, by doing away every ſettled notion relative to the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of his country, prepares him for that promiſcuous communion with different ſocieties of Chriſtians, for which you appear to be a zealous advocate, and in which the true character of *ſchiſm* conſiſts. It was with an eye to perſons who may be deceived by ſuch an indiſcriminate mode of writing which now too much prevails; or who may be led to conclude, that they are in communion with the church, when they attend irregular places of worſhip where the liturgy

of the church is made uſe of; that I obſerved, that many well-meaning pious perſons became *ſchiſmatics*, without knowing they were ſo;—a poſition which I ſee no reaſon to retract, and which, after what has been ſo fully ſaid on the nature of ſchiſm, it muſt be unneceſſary farther to explain.

There is a judicious remark to be found in the writings of an author, with whom you have at leaſt ſome acquaintance, which appears to have eſcaped your notice. "For lack (ſays he) of diligent obſerving the difference between the church of GOD *myſtical* and *viſible*, the overſights are neither few nor light that have been committed." HOOKER Ecc. Pol. lib. iii. An attention to this important diſtinction, which you will find clearly marked out in a book which has already been recommended to your attention, would have prevented your giving that deſcription of the church which renders every thing ſaid upon it as a *viſible* ſociety, both by the inſpired and primitive writers, totally inapplicable. For to be a ſubject of human government, the church muſt be a *viſible* ſociety; and it is in conſequence only of its being ſuch a viſible ſociety, that there can be that ſeparation from it which conſtitutes the ſin of ſchiſm.

This conſideration might have tended to eſtabliſh in your mind a more correct idea of what has been always underſtood by the unity of the Chriſtian church, than you at preſent appear to poſſeſs, and prevented you from becoming, in contradiction to your character both as a churchman and a ſtateſman, a patron of ſchiſm; by an occaſional attendance upon thoſe irregular places of worſhip, ſeparated from the communion of that church of which you are profeſſedly a member, and thereby giving your perſonal countenance to ſeparation from that eſtabliſhment, which you are conſtitutionally bound to ſupport.

This ſubject may not, it is probable, have ſtruck you in the ſame ſerious light that it does me. But, Sir, when by the train, which we were told ſome years ſince, was laying grain by grain, for the purpoſe of blowing up the old fabric of our eſtabliſhment, we are to underſtand ſome plan for drawing the body of the people away from our church; upon the idea, that when the diſſenters from it ſhall become the majority, they will not long be governed by the minority; it no longer becomes a matter of indifference, conſidered only in a political view, whether our fellow-ſubjects continue members of the eſtabliſhed church of their country, or not.

We have ſeen that a literary cabal in France, by poiſoning the fountains of learning, and introducing a new ſet of ideas into the human mind, inconſiſtent with all eſtabliſhed notions, has effected the deſtruction both of their church and government. We have too good reaſon to think, that a ſimilar plan for a ſimilar purpoſe is working in this country; which, by giving what are ſignificantly called *new lights* to the people, is deſigned to prepare them for that new order of things, by which, under the ſpecious title of reformation, many well-meaning, though not well-judging, perſons are miſerably impoſed upon.

I have too high an opinion of your character as a Chriſtian, to think that you would wiſh to act in concert with the projectors of ſuch a ruinous plan. At the ſame time, it muſt be ſubmitted to your conſideration, whether, by putting aſide every ſettled idea belonging to a church, as a *viſible* ſociety, and introducing thoſe looſe notions reſpecting church communion, which are to be found in your book, you do not make yourſelf inſtrumental in the promotion of a cauſe, which has for its object the ſetting men free from all regular and eſtabliſhed reſtraint.

This conſideration addreſſes itſelf to you, not leſs in your character as a legiſlator, than it does to you in

that of a member of the Chriſtian church. Schiſm in the church is what rebellion is in the ſtate; it is a breaking away from eſtabliſhed order, and ſetting up that idol, ſelf-government, in the place of it. It is private opinion acting againſt eſtabliſhed authority. Modern language may ſo explain away theſe two ſins, that even good men by degrees may become reconciled to them; but it cannot alter their nature. The God of order has fixed an indelible mark of reprobation upon them to the end of time. They are (what they ever muſt be, ſo long as the authority of the Bible is admitted) thoſe works of the fleſh, for which man will be called into judgment: and it ſhould be timely conſidered, that the ſame principle of independence, which gives birth to the one, waits only the opportunity to bring forth the other. The truth of this poſition ſtands confirmed upon record, in the hiſtory of this country in the laſt century. It has received additional confirmation from the late rebellion in America; the ſecret workings of which have been lately laid open to the world in a *maſterly** publication, which muſt recommend itſelf to every reader, with whom the character of a ſound divine,

* "A View of the Cauſes and Conſequences of the American Revolution, by the Rev. JONATHAN BOUCHER, A.M. and F.A.S."

a loyal ſubject, and a liberal man, is a valuable conſideration.

You ſay, page 197, that you are "by no means friendly to the doctrine of *ſelf*-conſtituted authority, *ſelf*-ordination, and the like. *Self* (you ſay) is a very ſuſpicious object in all its operations; whether they relate to ſelf-conceit, ſelf-ſufficiency, ſelf-confidence, ſelf-righteouſneſs, or ſelf-gratification; and in this arduous undertaking of the miniſterial office, a perſon ought to be more than ever upon his guard againſt himſelf; ſo that, inſtead of obtruding or exalting himſelf into ſuch an awful as well as honourable engagement, deep humility and ſelf-diffidence, as well as learning and piety, ought certainly to be conſidered as eſſential qualifications for that character."

I am happy, Sir, when I can find any part of your book, in which our ſentiments perfectly agree. It is with pleaſure, therefore, that I have marked down the foregoing quotation: and it is not without much real concern, that I obſerve other parts of your book not in ſtrict correſpondence with it. When any man undertakes the miniſterial office, to which he has not been regularly appointed, he does not appear to ſtand in that predicament, in which, according to your own principles, he ought to ſtand;

as not poſſeſſing that deep humility and ſelf-diffidence, (allowing him to be poſſeſſed of learning and piety) which are conſidered as eſſential qualifications for the character he has aſſumed.

In page 153, you ſpeak of a *Mr. Green*, who officiates in a chapel, "where the church of England ſervice is read; where (you ſay) you are not aſhamed to confeſs you have frequently attended, and (you add) that you believe the church of England has not a more true ſon." By a *true* ſon, we underſtand a *dutiful* ſon; a ſon that lives in obedience and conformity to the directions of his mother.

And is this the caſe with Mr. Green? He may be very competent, ſo far as his perſonal abilities are concerned, to diſcharge the office he has undertaken; but by obtruding himſelf into it, without any regular appointment, he flies in the face of the church, acting in direct diſobedience to her canons, and in a notorious contradiction to the liturgy, which he preſumes to make uſe of. So far, therefore, from ſeeing him in the light of a *true* ſon of the church of England, I ſhould conſider him as no ſon at all; but a perſon who had exalted himſelf into an honourable engagement, which he has received no commiſſion to diſcharge, and thereby ſupporting a notorious and

unneceſſary ſeparation from that church, of which, by a ſtrange perverſion of language, you have done him the honour to call him a *true* ſon.

A hint has been thrown out, that there is a plan in agitation for putting the Engliſh language into the ſame crucible, that the lives in the Biographia Britannica have been already put, with the intent that it may come forth more refined, *i. e.* more accommodated to the doctrines and opinions of the conventicle. But till ſuch a great event in the hiſtory of literature take place, it ſhould be conſidered, that there are eſtabliſhed ideas annexed to certain words, which muſt be admitted by any author who would write intelligibly. The word *ſteady*, for inſtance, conveys the idea of ſomething *fixed*, *uniform*, and *determined*, in the principles and conduct of the party, to whom it is applied. In page 8 of your preface, you call yourſelf a *ſteady* member of the church of England. But if the church of England is, what I maintain it to be, a Divinely-incorporated ſociety, under the inſtituted government of biſhops; no perſon can be a *ſteady* member of that church, who leaves the biſhops and clergy of that church, and joins himſelf to any teacher who ſets up a place of public worſhip, within their juriſdiction, independent of their authority.

You ſay, page 158, that thoſe "perſons who frequent a chapel in Bath, that is notoriouſly independent of the epiſcopal juriſdiction, are among the moſt ſound and *ſteady* members of the church." And, to confirm your opinion by your practice, you bear teſtimony, pages 153 and 155, in favour of teachers, whoſe chapels you frequent in Bath, who are actually officiating in a ſtate of decided and determined ſeparation from the church of England. To me, who read the Engliſh language in the old letter, theſe circumſtances appear big with contradiction. I thank GOD there is no confuſion in my ideas upon this ſubject. It is a ſubject that has been long weighed in my ſcale of judgment, and I ſhould be ſorry to be accuſed of having written haſtily and unadviſedly upon it. At the ſame time, therefore, that I reſpect the conſcientious ſober Diſſenter of every denomination, and ſhould be ſorry to give offence to any ſuch, I feel myſelf called upon, as a miniſter of the church, to declare, that no poſſible diſtinction can be more clear to my mind, than that which ever muſt ſubſiſt between the *ſteady* member of the church of England, and him who worſhips in *a ſtate of ſeparation from it*.

The difference of opinion between us upon this ſubject muſt ariſe from our having annexed a different idea to the word *church*. By a church you appear to underſtand an aſſembly of profeſſing Chriſtians, gathered together under any teacher who maintains the high Calviniſtic doctrine, which you conſider to be the fundamental doctrines of Chriſtianity, to whatever ſect they may belong, or by whatever denomination they may be diſtinguiſhed. By a church I have been taught to underſtand, a ſociety of Chriſtians regularly incorporated under a government deriving its authority from Divine inſtitution. No man will more readily give you credit for the object which your zeal upon this occaſion has in view, or more cordially join with you in promoting it, than myſelf, namely, that the Goſpel of CHRIST ſhould be preached. It is the grand *deſideratum* of the Chriſtian world, and happy is that man who becomes an inſtrument in its promotion.

But I muſt think, that the plan which Divine Wiſdom projected in the regular eſtabliſhment of his church, is beſt calculated for that purpoſe; and that neither the honour of GOD, nor the ſalvation of man, can be ſo effectually promoted in any other way.

There is, I know, an idea growing among us, to which you, as well as ſome other modern writers, have given countenance, and which I am ſorry to ſay, is not without its advocates even among our clergy, that where the Goſpel of CHRIST is preached, there is the church of CHRIST. This idea, which manifeſtly tends to confound a ſubject which ought to be clearly diſcriminated, by making the unity of the church conſiſt only in the profeſſion of the ſame doctrine; an idea admirably calculated to put out of ſight the important diſtinction between the church and the diſſenting meeting-houſe, and thereby impoſe upon uninformed Chriſtians; in conformity with which, in page 156, you invite the eſtabliſhed clergy "to give the right-hand of fellowſhip to their diſſenting brethren, by an occaſional attendance upon their miniſtry," in which you are pleaſed to ſay, "the *true church unity* conſiſts;" is an idea, however plauſible, which ſtrikes me in a moſt objectionable light, not only becauſe it is founded upon the moſt dangerous fallacy, but becauſe it will ultimately operate to the diſadvantage of the cauſe it is oſtenſibly brought to ſerve. For what ſectariſt is there, who will not ſtrenuouſly maintain, that the Goſpel is preached in the aſſembly to which he belongs? Aſk the Socinian; aſk the Quaker; aſk

the wildeſt itinerant preacher that ever diſgraced the Chriſtian cauſe; each will appeal to the Bible, in confirmation of his pretenſions: and how ſhall the point be determined? Theſe ſeveral ſeparatiſts will read the Bible in their *own* language, but not in *yours*; and conſequently there will be as many churches among us, as there are opinions: for, by ſubſtituting the *inviſible* for the *viſible* church of CHRIST, you deprive us of that regular ſtandard of judgment, by which the Chriſtian faith is to be aſcertained; and thereby leave the humble Chriſtian expoſed to the vain pretenſions of ignorance and ſelf-conceit, and to all the various deluſions of enthuſiaſm and error.

I am perfectly aware, Sir, that ſuch ſentiments will not entitle me to a rank among your *worthies*; I mean among thoſe my liberal-minded brethren in the miniſtry, whoſe example you have been pleaſed to ſet before me in page 156, but by whoſe example I cannot profit; becauſe I cannot purchaſe a popular title at the expence of my profeſſional character. My brethren muſt judge for themſelves. I would only take leave to obſerve, in anſwer to what you ſay reſpecting "clergy of *no inferior rank*" frequenting an independent meeeting-houſe, that ſuperiority of

rank does not change the nature of an offence, but only renders it more conſpicuous.

But as I am now addreſſing this ſubject to you, in your character of a legiſlator of this country, I ſhall take leave to mention certain circumſtances, which to me appear worthy of attention. Long obſervation, accompanied with ſome reflection, has convinced me, that there is at this time a ſecret ſyſtematic plan regularly carrying on, for the purpoſe of effecting the overthrow of the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of this country. The connection between the eccleſiaſtical and civil part of our conſtitution need not, I truſt, be pointed out to you. Much leſs can it be neceſſary to refer you to that chapter of national experience, which every wiſe ſtateſman, in theſe perilous times in particular, muſt be ſuppoſed to have before him. It is pretty generally underſtood, I believe, that the government of this country has had a very narrow eſcape from the deſolating effect of thoſe levelling principles, which are directed againſt eſtabliſhments of every kind: and, I believe, it is as generally underſtood, that if the clergy in particular, and thoſe of the laity who thought with them, had not made uſe of extraordinary exertions to counteract the poiſon, that for ſome years has been induſtriouſly

dealt out among us, we ſhould not have been in the ſituation in which we now are.

But although the glorious conſtitution of this country has, thank GOD, riſen ſuperior to the open and daring attacks that have been meditated, it may ſtill fall a ſacrifice to the ſecret and undermining plans that are ſtill carrying on againſt it. It behoves us, therefore, to be on our guard; particularly ſo, as enemies to our eſtabliſhment are to be found within the walls of it, as well as without. We who are confirmed in our principles upon conviction; who have not taken our opinion either of the doctrine or government of the church from mere tradition, cannot be indifferent to theſe things. We cannot think it a matter of little conſequence, whether Chriſtians are aſſembled in a church, under regularly-ordained miniſters, or in a meeting-houſe under ſelf-appointed teachers.

ST. IGNATIUS tells us, in his epiſtle to the Philadelphians, (and it is preſumed you will bow to the authority of a diſciple of the Apoſtles) that "as many as are of GOD and JESUS CHRIST, are in communion with the biſhop." "Οσοι Θεȣ εισιν και Ιησȣ Χριςȣ, ȣτοι μετα τȣ Επισκοπȣ εισιν." We

conſider, therefore, the *latitudinarian* notion, for which you appear ſo warm an advocate, which confines the attention of the Chriſtian diſciple to the doctrine taught, without any regard being paid to the character of the teacher, as big with ruinous conſequences. It tends to annihilate the miniſterial commiſſion, by teaching Chriſtians to expect that the end for which that commiſſion was originally appointed, may as effectually be accompliſhed without it. This concluſion not only ſets at nought the counſel of GOD in the inſtitution of his church, but, by removing every eſtabliſhed reſtraint, leaves Chriſtians at the mercy of every vain imagination, that may from time to time poſſeſs the mind of ſelf-opiniated man.

The effect of this *latitudinarian* notion we have before our eyes. Separation from the church of this country is daily increaſing. Funds are eſtabliſhed, and writers employed, to propagate and ſupport the *cauſe of ſchiſm.*

To ſpread and preach what is called the Goſpel, carries with it a plauſible ſound, well calculated to deceive the unwary; and thus perſons of reſpectability, both for piety and character, are brought to countenance the proceeding. You may, perhaps,

have heard, Sir, that the number of licences granted for places of diſſenting worſhip are, in ſome parts of the kingdom, increaſed within the laſt year in a proportion of ſix to one. But, it is probable, you do not know that ſome of the ſelf-conſtituted teachers who apply for them, are of ſo low a deſcription of perſons, as to be obliged to ſubſtitute their marks for their names. Such are many of thoſe itinerant preachers, whoſe office it is, under the plauſible idea of ſpreading the Goſpel, to obtrude themſelves unſolicited into pariſhes, to draw away congregations from their regular miniſters, and to ſpread through the country thoſe ſeeds of diſaffection to the eſtabliſhment, both in church and ſtate, as cannot fail, if not counteracted, to bring, in due time, an abundant harveſt.

I am aware of the tender ground upon which I am treading: in this looſe age, in which words and things ſeem, in a great degree, to have loſt their original legitimate connexion, to ſtand up for the importance of inſtituted forms and regular diſcipline, as well as pure doctrine, is to ſubject one's-ſelf to the imputation of being an high-churchman; and a ſeverer ſatire on the principles of the times could hardly be found, than that ſuch an imputation is

now deemed reproachful. The meagre ſpectres of bigotry and intolerance, I am well aware, are already ſtalking before your affrighted imagination; and you can think of nothing but of Popes, and Cardinals, and fiery inquiſitions. But, Sir, the church of England will be allowed, her enemies being her judges, to poſſeſs more of the true ſpirit of Chriſtian charity, than any of thoſe ſectaries, who are unhappily ſeparated from her communion. It would not be doing juſtice to the church, of which I think it an honour to be a miniſter, if, whilſt I refrained from making offenſive compariſons, I neglected to ſtate, what I conceive to be, a poſition univerſally admitted. The clergy of that church, in whatever light they may have been occaſionally repreſented by thoſe who bear no good will to our Sion, conſider mutual forbearance to be an eſſential part of Chriſtian charity. At the ſame time, therefore, that they fulfil their duty, in defending both the doctrine and government of the church, and preventing, as far as may be, the growth of ſchiſm, they wiſh to do it upon the principles of the Reformation; which direct them to oppoſe error of every kind by ſound argument and Chriſtian perſuaſion, in confidence that the church of England requires no aid from any other quarter.

As one of the miniſters of that church, I flatter myſelf, my ideas upon the ſubject of toleration are not leſs liberal than your own. But it appears to me eſſential to peace and good order, not leſs than to the cauſe I have at heart, that this ſubject ſhould be rightly underſtood.

The Act of Toleration, like all other acts, was deſigned to convey a certain definite idea, and to be miniſterial to a certain declared purpoſe: but, in conſequence of its being one of the worſt digeſted acts in the ſtatute-book, it has failed in both reſpects. It was originally made to ſecure proteſtant diſſenters, upon certain conditions, from the conſequences attendant upon non-conformity; but was never meant to countenance or encourage it, much leſs to furniſh ſeparatiſts with opportunities of traducing that eſtabliſhment, under which they are protected. Thoſe diſſenters, for whoſe ſecurity it was made, are now among the firſt to lament its abuſe; ſeeing, that, under the undefinable plea of liberty of conſcience, it has become ſubverſive of every thing like order in the diſcharge of the ſpiritual function, by allowing every man's private opinion to become the ſtandard of his miniſterial capacity and profeſſional ability.

But though it might be difficult to preſcribe bounds to the operation of an irregular principle, by ſaying to the ſeparatiſt, thus far ſhalt thou go, and no further; and therefore the conſequences which have followed from the looſe conſtruction of the act in queſtion might have been foreſeen; ſtill we need not heſitate to declare, that both the letter and ſpirit of the act are decidedly againſt that irregular practice which you eſpouſe.

After having, in page 157, preſented the reader with a picture highly coloured of a Chriſtian congregation, which, from having been "accuſtomed to be fed with marrow and fatneſs, the true bread of life, has been reduced to the lamentable condition of feeding on huſks, or ſwallowing poiſon in the church;" you ſay, that "under theſe circumſtances they avail themſelves of the law of toleration, and build a chapel, where the church ſervice and offices are adhered to, and in all reſpects conduct themſelves as quiet peaceable ſons of the eſtabliſhment."

I am ſorry to find myſelf obliged to comment upon the foregoing ſtatement; becauſe it appears to me to be not more inconſiſtent with charity and truth, than it is with your character as a legiſlator of this country.

You know, it is preſumed, for what ſpecific purpoſe the Toleration Act was made. You muſt know,

therefore, that thoſe members of our church who avail themſelves of it to build a chapel, in which the ſervice of the church of England is uſed, are acting contrary to the intention of the legiſlature, by proſtituting an act to a purpoſe very different from that to which it was deſigned to miniſter. And is it conſiſtent with the character of a legiſlator, to countenance a notorious proſtitution of a legiſlative act; by which proſtitution, that act which was deſigned only to be an act of grace for diſſenters, becomes *hoſtile* to the very eſtabliſhment which he is engaged to ſupport?

Wiſhing to forbear from all harſh concluſions, I muſt ſuppoſe, that great want of conſideration has prevailed upon this ſubject; and that neither thoſe who avail themſelves in this caſe of the Toleration Act, nor thoſe legiſlators who countenance them in ſuch an irregular proceeding, have placed it in the proper point of view before them.

But however harſh either in ſentiment or language the charge may ſeem, I muſt and do maintain, that the other part of your ſtatement is neither conſiſtent with truth or charity. It is not conſiſtent with truth, becauſe no member of our church who makes a proper uſe of the liturgy and ſacraments, can be in that *ſtarving condition* you repreſent; ſuch an one is fed

with the *true bread of life.* For upon this head I muſt beg leave to remind you, that joining in the Apoſtle's doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer, conſtitute the eſſential parts of the Chriſtian ſervice. And ſo far as your lamentable deſcription reſpects the performance of the preacher, (though I hope I am as ſtrong an advocate for Goſpel preaching as yourſelf) charity requires that there ſhould be ſomething more than bare aſſertion to juſtify its *general* application.

What you proceed to ſay on the ſubject of our church ſervice and offices, cannot poſſibly be admitted. The church of England ſervice, as we have already obſerved, can be performed no where but *in* the church of England. The liturgy of that church may indeed be read in any place, and by any perſon; but it ceaſes to be the ſervice of the church, when it is read *out of it.* In like manner the ſacraments, ſo far as reſpect the form and letter of them, may be adminiſtered in any place upon the ſame plan, and by any perſon; but they are not *the ſacraments of the church,* ſave when they are adminiſtered by a perſon regularly commiſſioned for that purpoſe, and in communion with the biſhop.

Admitting theſe premiſes, which are not to be controverted, becauſe they are founded upon the eſtabliſhed doctrine of the church for upwards of ſeventeen hundred years, it evidently follows from them, that whatever miniſter officiates in Lady HUNTINGDON's chapel at Bath, or in any chapel of a ſimilar kind, is a *ſchiſmatic*, and conſequently all thoſe who communicate with him, communicate in *ſchiſm*. You call this, in your ironical language, "*a charitable anathema.*" Page 160. I call it ſpeaking the truth in charity, as a miniſter of the church is bound to do, deſirous of delivering his own ſoul by not ſuffering ſin upon his brethren; for I conſider that true Chriſtian charity obliges us, upon catholic principles, to write men *up* to the church, and not as the manner of ſome hath been, to write the church *down* to them.

Not expecting, therefore, to eſcape your cenſure, I have provided a ſhield againſt it in the authority of Archbiſhop BRAMHALL, who gives the following character of a ſchiſmatic, which I leave you to compare at your leiſure with any of thoſe irregular miniſters whoſe conduct you eſpouſe,

"Whoſoever (ſays the Archbiſhop) doth uncharitably make ruptures in the myſtical body of CHRIST, or ſets up altar againſt altar in his church, or with-

draws his obedience from the Catholic, or its repreſentative or general council, or *from any lawful ſuperiors*, without juſt grounds; whoſoever, not contenting himſelf with his due place in the church, doth attempt to uſurp an higher place, to the diſorder and diſturbance of the whole body; whoſoever takes upon himſelf to reform, without juſt authority and good grounds; and laſtly, whoſoever doth wilfully break the line of Apoſtolic ſucceſſion, which is the very nerves and ſinews of eccleſiaſtical unity and communion, both with the preſent church and with the Catholic ſymbolical church of all ſucceſſive ages: *he is a ſchiſmatic*, whether he be guilty of heretical pravity or not." Archbiſhop BRAMHALL's juſt Vindication of the Church of England, chap. ii.

I have thought it neceſſary to be ſomewhat particular upon the foregoing ſubject, becauſe I underſtand that the plan from which the greateſt ſucceſs is expected againſt the eſtabliſhment, is that of ſetting up what are called *broad-bottom chapels*, a ſort of *extra-parochial*, *extra-epiſcopal* congregations; intended to do away every diſtinct idea of church communion, by teaching people to think, that where the liturgy of the church of England is uſed, there the church of England is to be found. This plan, artfully calcu-

lated to impoſe upon uninformed Chriſtians, by drawing them away inſenſibly from that church, of which they have been admitted members, and by inducing them to conſider themſelves "peaceable ſons of the eſtabliſhment," page 159, when they are in actual rebellion againſt it, and in a ſtate of ſeparation from it, is induſtriouſly promoted by publications circulated at a cheap price; whoſe object it is, by miſrepreſentations of notorious facts, and artful details of the hackneyed objections heretofore brought by diſſenters againſt the church of England, without the leaſt notice being taken of the anſwers that have been given to them, to prepare the minds of the people for whoſe uſe they are deſigned, for the ready commiſſion of the ſin of ſchiſm.

Some of theſe publications have occaſionally fallen in my way. They are entitled to notice on no other account than from the miſchief they are calculated to do among the people, unfurniſhed with knowledge to detect the fallacies contained in them.

Their general object is to efface every impreſſion relative to the regular conſtitution of the church; and under the plauſible idea of ſpiritual qualifications, of which every profeſſor is to form a judgment for himſelf, to ſet Chriſtians looſe from all thoſe reſtraints of

order and government which have ever been deemed eſſential to the promotion of the Chriſtian cauſe. One ſpecimen will be ſufficient to mark the quality of the writers engaged in this Babel undertaking.

In a letter publiſhed in the Evangelical Magazine, for the month of July, 1797, (a publication which ſeems to have been ſet on foot for the expreſs purpoſe of propagating ſchiſm) with the view of preparing the mind of the reader for ſeparation from the epiſcopal church, he is informed, that the office of a modern biſhop bears no reſemblance to that of a primitive one, who was but a paſtor of ſome particular congregation or aſſembly of Chriſtians, to whoſe ſpiritual wants he could *perſonally* adminiſter. "It ſeems then, (ſays the writer of the letter in queſtion) that a primitive church was of very ſmall extent, no more than a room could receive, and that probably of a poor houſe too." And by way of making this idea of a primitive church inſtrumental to the promotion of the object he had in view, that of encouraging ſeparation from the eſtabliſhed church of his country, the writer proceeds to ſay, "Let no man ſmile, or think it contemptible or degrading, but I ſee no more ſtriking image of a primitive church, than a little methodiſt meeting in a mud-floor room, in a little town or vil-

lage, where a few perſons are aſſembled to hear the word of GOD."

Here is an idea exactly calculated to flatter the prejudices of the uninformed perſons to whom it is addreſſed. "A little methodiſt meeting in a mud-floor room, in a little town or village," is here repreſented to be a *church*, and the teacher of it (ſome ſelf-conſtituted miniſter, it may be, an ignorant ſhoemaker, baker, taylor, or weaver) appears in the character of a primitive biſhop. But the author of this letter, if he knew any thing of the hiſtory of the primitive church, muſt have known that it was not the place *where* Chriſtians were aſſembled, but the miniſterial authority *under which* they were aſſembled, that gave to the congregation the title of a church. The queſtion is not, whether the primitive Chriſtians were aſſembled in an upper ſtory, or in a mud-floor; but whether they were aſſembled under the miniſtry of the Apoſtles, or that of thoſe who had received commiſſion from them to officiate in holy things. He muſt, moreover, have known, that the juriſdiction of the primitive biſhops was by far more extenſive than that of their modern ſucceſſors.

To eſtabliſh, however, the poſition reſpecting the biſhop being only a miniſter of a ſingle congregation,

an appeal is made to the writings of ST. IGNATIUS, as demonſtrative upon the point. Upon his authority the reader is informed, that "no baptiſm muſt be adminiſtered, no love-feaſt kept, without the biſhop: no marriage was to be contracted without his conſent; and he was required to ſpeak ſeparately to every one of his flock about their ſouls." From whence the following concluſion is drawn: "Theſe and other particulars annexed to the office of a biſhop, beſides his conſtant miniſtrations in the congregation, *inconteſtibly demonſtrate* how ſmall the diſtrict or dioceſe was at firſt, over which the primitive biſhop preſided."

The object which the writer had in view, in the quotation from ST. IGNATIUS, was to convince the reader that the biſhop muſt *perſonally* aſſiſt at the adminiſtration of every ſervice of the church; from whence it followed, that every aſſembly of Chriſtians muſt have its attendant biſhop; and conſequently, that the office of the primitive biſhop could not be extended beyond a *ſingle* congregation.

Admitting the writer's premiſes, his concluſion will follow. But inſtead of *inconteſtible demonſtration*, all that I diſcover on this occaſion is great want either of information or of integrity. Either the writer of the letter alluded to, had not read ST. IGNATIUS's

epiſtles, or if he had, he made a partial quotation from them for the purpoſe of miſleading his reader. Upon turning to the epiſtles in queſtion, I find ST. IGNATIUS writing thus:* "Let no man do any thing of what appertains to the church without the biſhop;" that is, as the context proves, *without commiſſion from the biſhop.* "Let that ſacrament be judged effectual and firm, which is diſpenſed by the biſhop, or him to whom the biſhop has committed it." The above quotation places the office of the biſhop in the proper point of view, as the governor of the church, without whoſe authority nothing was to be done in the church; at the ſame time that it removes the idea placed before his reader by the writer of the letter in queſtion, out of ſight. "There are which hold, that between a biſhop and preſbyter, touching power of order, there is no difference. The reaſon of which conceit is, for that they ſee preſbyters no leſs than biſhops authoriſed to offer up prayers, &c.; but they conſidered not withall, as they ſhould, that the preſbyter's authority to do theſe things is *derived from the biſhop*, who doth ordain him thereunto; ſo

* "Μηδεις χωρις Επισκοπου τι πρασσετω των ανηκοντων εις την εκκλησιαν. Εκεινη βεβαια ευχαριστια ηγεισθω, η υπο τον Επισκοπον ουσα, η ω αν αυτος επιτρεψη." IGNAT. Ep. ad Smyrn.

that even in thoſe things which are common to both, the power of the one is a certain light, borrowed as it were from the other's lamp."*

Indeed, had the author of the letter in queſtion been properly acquainted with church hiſtory, he would have known that he was only going over old ground. CARTWRIGHT, the arch-puritan, in Queen ELIZABETH's days, wrote a book to prove the ſame point, that primitive biſhops were miniſters of pariſhes *only*, not *overſeers of dioceſes*. The ſolid anſwer which this book received, put an end to the ſubject for the time. At the latter end of the laſt century, however, when the diſſenters began to recover their wonted activity, the ſubject was again revived by a Mr. CLARKSON, and conſidered as a new diſcovery. But it was laid completely to reſt by the learned Dr. MAURICE, to whom no anſwer has ever been given.†

In fact, *independency*, which is grounded upon this notion reſpecting the primitive biſhops as paſtors of ſingle independent congregations, was never heard of

* HOOKER Ec. Pol. book vii. ſect. 5.

† This ſubject has lately been revived in form by Profeſſor CAMPBELL; but he has ſaid little upon it which had not been ſaid, and compleatly anſwered, near one century before his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory (which in many parts ſpeaks the language neither of truth nor charity) made its appearance in the world.

at the time of the reformation. Biſhop STILLINGFLEET calls it a "*novel fancy*, that hath not age enough to plead preſcription." Sermon againſt Separation. When it firſt appeared in the world, it was condemned by an expreſs canon of the whole reformed church in France, in the year 1644, "as a ſect moſt prejudicial to the church, and dangerous to the ſtate, becauſe, in caſe it ſhould prevail, it would form as many religions as there be pariſhes." BINGHAM's Apology of the French Church, book i. chap. 1.

The letter here alluded to contains many other confident aſſertions, calculated to impoſe upon the uninformed reader, and to render him diſſatisfied with the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of his country. It will be ſufficient to point out one of them. "It deſerves," the letter writer ſays, "eſpecial notice, that univerſally throughout the whole church the offices of every kind were *elective*, and biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, the choice of the people; nor can I find, in a ſingle inſtance, the appointment to theſe offices, without the ſuffrage of the faithful. It was the moſt indiſputed axiom, that they who knew the value of their own ſouls, ſhould *elect* thoſe as their teachers in whom they could repoſe the greateſt confidence." Here we have bold aſſertion, unaccompanied with the leaſt

ſhadow of proof. Such was well calculated for parties, who, not being qualified to examine, muſt be contented to take things upon truſt. But the writer, if acquainted with his ſubject, muſt have known, that what he calls a "moſt undiſputed axiom," has not only been diſputed, but diſproved by numberleſs writers. Without detaining you by entering particularly into this controverted point, there are two or three circumſtances which I would take leave to recommend to this writer's conſideration.

ST. CLEMENT, in his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, writes thus: "The Apoſtles (ſays he) conſtituted (or ordained) biſhops and deacons, for ſuch as (were not yet converted, but) ſhould in ſome time to come be brought over to the faith." There needs no comment upon this teſtimony; for, whatever imaginary people may be ſuggeſted to have borne a part in the election or ordination of ſuch biſhops and deacons as theſe, it is plain the people over whom they were afterwards to preſide, or to whom they were to miniſter, could have none at all. "It is not imaginable, (ſays the learned HAMMOND)*

* HAMMOND on IGNATIUS's epiſtles, page 31. Should the author of the letter here alluded to be open to conviction, and not determined to maintain, *per fas et nefas*, his own favourite poſitions,

on this epiſtle of ST. CLEMENT's, how the examination and approbation could belong to the people, or the whole church, when thoſe over whom they were conſtituted were not yet come in; they are made biſhops, των μελλοντων πιςυειν, of thoſe which ſhould afterwards come into the faith. And if there had been a full church to chooſe, yet the matter in CLEMENS, extending not only to the biſhops of the preſent, but alſo the ſucceſſors for the future age, what right could the then preſent people have to chooſe not only for their own but the future age, and ſo deprive their ſucceſſors of their privilege? But waving both theſe, the matter is otherwiſe clear. They are the ſame perſons which did preach and conſtitute, and examine or approve, that is, the Apoſtles did every one of theſe; and doing it, τω πνευματι, by the Spirit, by revelation or direction of the Spirit, (in the ſame manner as they are ſaid to know by CHRIST that there would be contention about this matter, and that having received perfect foreknowledge they conſtituted thoſe biſhops) it is evident they had no need of any act of the people in doing it; and ſo that the

I would recommend to his conſideration the Diſſertations of HAMMOND againſt BLONDEL, which, as CHILLINGWORTH obſerves, never *were* anſwered, nor *ever will be*.

examination and approbation was that of the *Apoſtles*, and *not of the people;* of the Apoſtles, aſſiſted and directed by the Spirit of GOD, and not ſo much as adviſed, that we hear of, or inſtructed by the people." See HAMMOND, vol. xi. on IGNATIUS's Epiſtles, ſect. 1. chap. 4. page 31. According to the teſtimony, then, of this primitive writer, who lived in the Apoſtolic age, the Apoſtles did unqueſtionably conſtitute and ordain paſtors in the church, without the ſuffrage or election of the people. The text, Acts xiv. 23, which has been uſually appealed to in favour of popular election, will be found, upon conſulting the learned HAMMOND, not to apply to the ſubject. And it is remarkable, "that the inquiſitive SUICER, (who was friend enough to popular elections) amongſt other ſignifications of the word χειροτονειν, undertakes to prove, by many teſtimonies and examples, that the ſtretching out of the hand included in it, imports no more than barely *creating*, *conſtituting*, and *deſigning* perſons to the place or office intended for them, as diſtinct from *ſuffrage* and *election*; and (which is not a little to the purpoſe) produces this very text, at the head of many other authorities, for a clear teſtimony and example of it."

The commiſſion to TIMOTHY is directly referred to in 2 TIM. ii. 2. "The things that thou haſt heard of me, among many witneſſes, (ſays the great Apoſtle) the ſame commit thou to faithful men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo." The ſubſtance of TITUS's commiſſion is to be found, TITUS i. 5. "For this cauſe left I thee in Crete, (ſays the Apoſtle) that *thou* ſhouldeſt ſet in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, *as I had appointed thee.*"[2]

From the foregoing texts it evidently appears, "that there was a full right and power of ordaining elders in the church unqueſtionably inveſted in theſe primitive paſtors of the Apoſtolical churches: That each of them, in his *ſingle perſon*, is expreſsly ſpecified, addreſſed, and pointed to, for the diſcharge and execution of it—'*Commit thou to faithful men, &c.* and *that thou ſhouldeſt ordain elders, &c.* as I had appointed thee."

And that there is not the leaſt direction, or ſo much as hint or intimation given to either of them, to call in the aſſiſtance, or wait the approbation, of the people in the caſe; on the contrary, there is the ſtrongeſt caution againſt it, when ST. PAUL, inſtructing TIMOTHY in the genius of the people of the

province, in which he had placed him, in plain terms foretells what they would one day do, if they were left to their own elections, and might chooſe paſtors for themſelves. "The time will come, (ſays he) when they will not endure ſound doctrine, but after their own luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves teachers, having itching ears." 2 TIM. iv. 3. This was a pretty fair warning, one would think, both to TIMOTHY himſelf and to his ſucceſſors too, (for it was an indefinite prophecy in point of time to them all) that they ſhould beware of truſting too much to the votes and ſuffrages of the people, in that particular affair eſpecially, of providing paſtors for themſelves.

Thus much will be ſufficient to point out to you the narrow ground, upon which the boldeſt aſſertions ſometimes ſtand.

But upon the ſuppoſition, that the end which writers againſt our eſtabliſhment have in view ſhould be completely anſwered, by the body of the community being drawn away from our church, give me leave to aſk, what advantage will be derived from that circumſtance to the ſtate? (for in that point of view I am now placing the ſubject.) Do you think, Sir, that the government of this country will ſtand upon a firmer foundation than at preſent, when its

chief ſupport ſhall, in a great degree, have been drawn from it?

The idea induſtriouſly propagated by the Rev. Mr. HAWEIS is certainly calculated to make converts among thoſe to whom it is addreſſed; but it requires but a ſmall ſhare of diſcernment to diſcover its fallacy.

"Not all the Popes of Rome, (ſays he*) not all the biſhops and archbiſhops, nor all the ſynods in the univerſe, can make a man a miniſter of CHRIST, whatever preferment he may be qualified to hold by law, who has not been *inwardly* moved by the Holy Ghoſt, and called and qualified by the great Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls; and where ſuch call and qualifications are found, and ſuch a man approved and choſen by ſuch as have experienced a *like call and qualifications*; whether the commiſſion be delivered from a rochet or a cloak; if CHRIST owns,

* "A Plea for Peace and Union among the living Members of the *real church* of CHRIST, by the Rev. T. HAWEIS, LL. B."

Mr. HAWEIS's mode of promoting union in the church is rather a ſingular one. In the dioceſe of Peterborough, he may, for any thing I know to the contrary, live in canonical obedience to his biſhop. But when the rector of All-Saints, Aldwinckle, comes into the dioceſe of Bath and Wells, he officiates in a place of worſhip, that is independent of epiſcopal juriſdiction; and that has, as I am informed, with the view of eſcaping parochial aſſeſſments, lately taken ſhelter, as a Diſſenting Meeting-Houſe, under the Toleration Act. "Such things are!"

bleſſes, and makes ſuch a miniſter a father of many ſpiritual children, and ſeals his approbation of the work by his ſpirit, in ſigns following; I think every gracious heart will be diſpoſed to acknowledge ſuch a man as a miniſter of CHRIST, completely authoriſed, and will prefer him to all the pomp and pride of worldly dignity, and an unrenewed ſpirit, by whatever title diſtinguiſhed."

Here is ſome plauſibility mixed with much dangerous doctrine. The whole quotation, taken together, may be conſidered as containing Mr. HAWEIS's infallible plan for vacating the Apoſtolic commiſſion, by eradicating from men's minds every idea relative to the inſtituted government of the Chriſtian church. A ſtrange undertaking for a miniſter of that church to engage in! According to this plan, the ordination of biſhops or archbiſhops is of little conſideration; the *call* and *qualifications* of the man make the miniſter of CHRIST. But, as this ſubject ſtrikes me, no ſpiritual qualifications whatever can ſuperſede the neceſſity of a *regular* appointment to the miniſterial office; becauſe CHRIST, for wiſe reaſons, left his church under *regular* government. Spiritual qualifications enable the miniſter to diſcharge his office with better effect; and he will be but an indifferent

miniſter, who is wanting in them; but it is the *regular appointment alone* that makes the man a miniſter.

If we conſider the church, as it is, *a regular* ſociety, we muſt have ſome fixed rules to go by, in every thing that relates to the management of its concerns. We are directed to ſeek knowledge from the mouth of the prieſt, for this reaſon, becauſe he is the meſſenger of the LORD of Hoſts; or, in the words of ST. PAUL, the ambaſſador for JESUS CHRIST. Chriſtians muſt, therefore, be furniſhed with ſome ſure criterion, by which they may know where this ambaſſador is to be found.

That this is a matter of no trifling concern, we are authoriſed to conclude, from the attention at all times paid by GOD to perſons inveſted with the miniſterial commiſſion, conſidered as a ſort of mediators between GOD and man. We read, for inſtance, that GOD would not heal ABIMELECH, though he knew the integrity of his heart, till ABRAHAM had prayed for him. "He is a prophet, (ſays GOD) he ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live." Gen. xx. 7. If the good CORNELIUS will have the Goſpel revealed to him, he muſt ſend to Joppa, for PETER to preach to him.

Now it is a decided poſition, that no ambaſſador can ſend himſelf. In like manner, and in alluſion to the ſame idea, the Apoſtle aſks, "how ſhall they preach, except they are ſent." Rom. x. 5. Mr. HAWEIS will anſwer the queſtion, by telling us, that thoſe perſons are *ſent* into the miniſtry, who have the *inward call* and qualifications for it. But there is a wide difference between being qualified for an office, and being authoriſed to undertake it. The former may be conſidered as an inviſible thing, of which we may not have it in our power to form a competent judgment. The miniſter may deceive himſelf, and of courſe cannot fail to deceive others. But the *outward* appointment to an office is that external mark, ſuited to the adminiſtration of a viſible ſociety, which our bleſſed SAVIOUR ſanctioned by his own practice, and by which we cannot be deceived.

For, taking the ſubject on Mr. HAWEIS's ground, it muſt be aſked, who is to judge of the call and qualifications of every particular miniſter: not the miniſter himſelf, ſurely? not quite ſo; but, what appears to amount to the ſame thing, miniſters of a ſimilar deſcription, who have received the *ſame call* and *qualifications* with himſelf, and have conſidered them as their ſufficient warrant for undertaking the miniſtry.

This appears to me to be a wild mode of writing, calculated only to exalt that little thing called *ſelf*, at the expence of propriety and order; and thereby to open a door to endleſs confuſion. The great Dr. JOHNSON, whoſe character for piety is too well eſtabliſhed to ſuffer us to ſuppoſe that he meant any diſparagement to ſound religion, when ſpeaking of the *inward* light to which ſome pretended, ſaid, it was a principle utterly incompatible with ſocial or civil ſociety. "If a man (ſaid he) pretend to a principle of action, of which I can know nothing; nay, not ſo much as that he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what that perſon may be prompted to do? When a perſon profeſſes to be governed by a written, aſcertained law, I can then know where to find him." BOSWELL's Life.

This judicious obſervation applies to the principle, upon which Mr. HAWEIS appears to act; which, by exchanging a certain and eſtabliſhed ſtandard of judgment for a fallible and unwarranted one, leaves the Chriſtian at ſome loſs with reſpect to the determination of his conduct, upon a ſubject of the moſt eſſential importance.

Deſirous of giving every pious perſon credit for he beſt intentions, I conceive that Mr. HAWEIS

cannot have conſidered the extent to which his principles may be carried, nor even that to which he himſelf has been carried by it. There is one conſideration, therefore, I would take leave to recommend to him, taken out of an excellent letter to the church of England, lately publiſhed. "One reformation without authority ſoon begets another of the ſame ſort: confuſion thickens; and of ſpiritual as well as of political anarchy we all know the end, we know whence it cometh, and whither it goeth. One corruption, once admitted, ſoon increaſes to more, till all is loſt. We preach wrong; that error is corrected by another—by a *reformation founded in diſobedience*, that turns to *ſchiſm*; and in ſchiſm, they that are wiſe *without* the church, will ſoon be wiſe *againſt it*: this leads to hereſy, and that to infidelity; a dreadful progreſs, but it hath been verified a thouſand times."*

Nor do I think that it can have occurred to you, Sir, that a principle of *inſubordination* to eſtabliſhed authority will never ceaſe to act, while there is any ſettled government to be acted againſt. The rebellion that originates in the church never fails to terminate in the ſtate; although ſome of thoſe, who

* Letter to the church of England, by the late Rev. Mr. JONES.

have not ſcrupled to begin the former, feel themſelves moſt revolting againſt the latter.

On this account, I have taken the liberty to addreſs this ſubject to your conſideration as a *legiſlator;* to prevent you from giving encouragement to practices, which you cannot wiſh to eſpouſe; which not only break in upon all ſettled order, but muſt ultimately tend to the diſadvantage of that cauſe, which it is your object to promote.

Schiſm is the prolific parent of hereſy. The eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church is the beſt ſecurity for the preſervation of the Chriſtian faith. Separation from it leads, ſooner or later, to confuſion and error. It does more: in the words of Mr. BAXTER, to whoſe authority you will pay reſpect, "it not only leads directly to apoſtacy from the faith, but ſhakes ſtates and kingdoms, having a lamentable influence on the civil peace. In a word, (ſays he) the ſcripture tells us, that where envying and ſtrife is, there is confuſion and every evil work." BAXTER's Chriſtian's Directory, page 739.

Should you not be too confirmed in your opinions to take a leaf out of any book, there are two publications, particularly relative to the preſent ſubject, which you will thank me for pointing out; becauſe

they will tend to furniſh you with more correct ideas upon ſome ſubjects, than you now appear to poſſeſs. I mean Biſhop STILLINGFLEET's Unreaſonableneſs of Separation, and Dr. MAURICE's Defence of Dioceſan Epiſcopacy: publications which, I truſt, you will think not unworthy the attention of thoſe ſeparating miniſters, whoſe chapels you occaſionally frequent, ſhould they (as it is moſt probable) be at preſent ſtrangers to their merit.

Admitting that the church of this country is not what it ought to be, every ſound member of it will be thankful to you for your endeavours to make it ſuch. But for that purpoſe, let me beſeech you not to attempt to *unmake* it; for, in ſo doing, you fight againſt GOD, who beſt knows the condition of his own church, and how to manage the concerns of it. He has not removed his candleſtick from among us: we may hope, therefore, that as yet he has not ſeen cauſe for ſo dreadful a judgment. At the ſame time, we are deeply ſenſible that, as members of the church, we are far "fallen from our firſt works."

But the indiſcriminate abuſe of the clergy, a diſregard of the eſtabliſhed order in the miniſtry, the ſpeaking diſreſpectfully of thoſe grand ſources of national information, the Univerſities, cannot tend to

bring things into a better condition. Taking experience for our inſtructor, our concluſion muſt be, that they will be productive of the very contrary effect.

Error, indeed, both in principle and practice, as to this point, ſeems to pervade our ſyſtem. For what proof is it in the power of any of us to give, that a due care for the preſervation of the eſtabliſhed church does form, generally ſpeaking, any part of the character of the members of our executive government? Nay, I am not ſure, that was the queſtion put to me, how it appears, that the heads of our church themſelves are ſufficiently impreſſed with the conviction of the dreadful conſequences, that cannot but follow from that ſchiſmatic rage which has of late years broken forth in this country, and which ſeems now to know no bounds; I could give ſuch an anſwer as would be ſatisfactory even to myſelf.

Far from meaning any offence, I truſt none will be taken at my going on to obſerve, that government ought to be ſenſible, and the heads of the church muſt know, that the eſtabliſhment in every country ſtands upon the broad baſis of *public opinion;* and that when the great body of the community ſhall be drawn from it, neither dignity of character, ſuperiority of learning, nor eminence of ſtation, will prevent its fall.

You, Sir, as a profeſſed ſupporter of that eſtabliſhment of which we now boaſt, muſt feel yourſelf intereſted in this ſubject. You muſt, moreover, be ſenſible, that the ſecurity which the legiſlature has granted to private opinion in religious matters, ought at leaſt to prove an equal ſecurity to the eſtabliſhed opinion of the community; and that thoſe who enjoy their own liberty in worſhip, ought not to be permitted either to write down, or preach down, the eſtabliſhment of their country. At preſent, I am ſorry to ſay, that an act of indulgence granted in favour of conſcientious Chriſtians, to whom the benefit of ſuch an act ought in all reaſon to be extended, is now, through abuſe, become in a great degree an act of hoſtility againſt that conſtitution by which it was originally granted. And I am inclined to think, that if the licentious practices that are now carrying on under the countenance of that much-abuſed act, ſhall continue increaſing upon us as they have of late years, that the *eſtabliſhed church of England* will be that ſociety of Chriſtians, which of all others in this country will ſtand moſt in need of protection and ſupport.

If you as a legiſlator can deviſe any plan conſiſtent with true liberty, and that right of private judgment in religious matters, which muſt to a certain degree be

admitted, to prevent the proſtitution of the Toleration Act to practices it was never deſigned to countenance; if you can be inſtrumental in reviving that diſcipline of the church, ſo neceſſary to the effectual adminiſtration of its ſpiritual government; and if you can find out a way to reſtore to the reſpectable parochial clergy that weight which their character ought to have in the ſcale of public eſtimation; you will, Sir, in a moſt eſſential degree, ſerve both church and ſtate.

The melioration of the morals of the community muſt depend on the joint exertions of the miniſter and the magiſtrate. What each may endeavour to do in his ſeparate character, will be more effectually done, when both act in concert. As the object they have in view ought to be the ſame, namely, the promotion of GOD's honour and their country's welfare, their method of promoting it ought to be regular, uniform, and conſiſtent. It were to be wiſhed that the clergy had no ground for complaint on this head: but this is a ſubject upon which, as a clergyman, I do not wiſh to enter. My only reaſon for introducing it has been, to take off at leaſt a portion of that heavy burthen, which is ſo generally and unmercifully laid upon the ſhoulders of my brethren, as reſponſible

for the morals of the community, by obſerving, that however zealous they may be in their miniſterial exertions, the ſtate of things is ſuch, that they are for the moſt part reduced to the neceſſity of being witneſſes to irregularities, and of lamenting over corruption, which it is no longer *in their power* to counteract or prevent.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

CONCLUDING LETTER.

SIR,

AS this will probably be the laſt time that I ſhall have the honour of a correſpondence with you, my profeſſional engagements neither permitting, nor the habits of my mind diſpoſing me, to remain in the field of controverſy, I am deſirous that every part of your late publication which challenges particular attention, ſhould receive its anſwer. With this view, my purpoſe is to make the preſent letter ſupplementary to thoſe which have preceded it, by adding what has ſince occurred in ſuch points as may not already have received ſufficient notice: and happy ſhall I be, if any endeavours of mine, how feeble ſoever, may be ſo fortunate as to render us, what all Chriſtians ſhould wiſh to be, of one mind, and of one judgment, on the ſeveral ſubjects we have reſpectively handled.

Your firſt letter (though I can readily believe, that ſo far from intending it, you were not even aware of it) might be thought to have been written againſt the eſtabliſhed church of this country; ſince, whatever was your purpoſe in writing it, its effect, if it has any, muſt be to ſupport the cauſe of ſeparation from it. For when a perſon, who "avows his ſincere attachment to the church of England in doctrine in conſtitution, and in diſcipline," admits likewiſe, that "they have no bad ground to ſtand upon, who ſeparate from it;" the concluſion drawn by ſeparatiſts will be, that more is meant than meets the ear; and it is hardly poſſible that improper uſe ſhould not be made of it. This ſubject I have thought it neceſſary to enter into at large, becauſe it conſtitutes a conſiderable part of the ground-work upon which your publication ſtands. Some few obſervations, however, have ſince occurred upon it, which ſeem to have no inconſiderable weight. One, which particularly recommends itſelf to the attention of a ſteady member of the church of England, as you profeſs you are, is to be found in the preface to the Ordination Service, in which the church of England aſſerts, that "it is evident unto all men, diligently reading holy ſcriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apoſtles' time

there have been theſe orders of miniſters in CHRIST's church, biſhops, prieſts, and deacons." (Vide Ordination Preface.) To which may be added the judicious remark, on this ſubject, of that learned divine Biſhop STILLINGFLEET; together with the demonſtration of that acute reaſoner Mr. CHILLINGWORTH. "The univerſal conſent of the church being proved, there is as great reaſon to believe the Apoſtolical ſucceſſion to be of *Divine inſtitution*, as the *canon of ſcripture*, or the *obſervation of the* LORDS'-*day*. We do not doubt but it is unlawful to add to or to diminiſh from the canon of ſcripture, and yet there is no plain text for it with reſpect to all the books contained in it; and ſome of the books were a long time diſputed in ſome churches: but the churches coming at laſt to a full agreement in this matter, upon due ſearch and inquiry, hath been thought ſufficient to bind all after-ages to make no alterations in it. And as to the Divine inſtitution of the LORD's-day, we do not go about to leſſen it, but only to ſhew, that ſome examples in ſcripture, being joined with the *univerſal practice* of the church in its pureſt ages, hath been allowed to be ſufficient ground not only for following ages to obſerve it, but to look on it as at leaſt an *Apoſtolical inſtitution*. Now it cannot but

ſeem unequal, not to allow the ſame force where there is the ſame evidence; and therefore our church hath wiſely and truly determined, *that ſince the Apoſtles' times there have been three orders, of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons*, and in a regular well-conſtituted church are to continue to the world's end."*

"Epiſcopal government (ſays Mr. CHILLINGWORTH, at the end of his demonſtration) is acknowledged to have been received univerſally in the church preſently after the times of the Apoſtles; between the Apoſtles and this *preſently after* there was not time enough for, nor poſſibility of, ſo great an alteration; and therefore there was no ſuch alteration as was pretended." From whence it follows, "that epiſcopacy, being confeſſed to be ſo ancient and catholic, muſt be alſo granted to be Apoſtolic." Q. E. D. "For ſo great a change as between preſbyterian government and epiſcopal could not poſſibly have prevailed all the world over in a little time. Had epiſcopal government been an aberration from, or a corruption of, the government left in the churches by the Apoſtles, it had been very ſtrange that it ſhould have been received in any *one* church ſo ſuddenly, or that it ſhould have prevailed in *all* for many

* Biſhop STILLINGFLEET's Ordination Sermon, preached in 1684-5.

ages after. 'Variaſſe debuerat error eccleſiarum; quod autem apud *omnes unum eſt*, non eſt *erratum*, ſed *traditum*.' Had the churches erred, they would have varied; what, therefore, is one and the ſame among all, came not ſure by error but by tradition. Thus TERTULLIAN argues, very probably, from the conſent of the churches of his time; and that, in matter of opinion, much more ſubject to unobſerved alteration. But that in the frame and ſubſtance of the neceſſary government of the church, a thing always in uſe and practice, there ſhould be ſo ſudden a change as *preſently after* the Apoſtles' times, and ſo univerſally as received in all churches; this is clearly *impoſſible*."*

The quotation which you have brought from Mr. GISBORNE, in page 12, begs the queſtion, but proves nothing; the concluſion drawn from it muſt, therefore, be weighed accordingly. But to the queſtion ſubjoined to it, "where ſhall a pure proteſtant church be found with biſhops coming in ſucceſſion from the Apoſtles to the preſent day?" it may be anſwered, that a pure proteſtant church, ſo far as the *conſtitution of it* is concerned, with biſhops coming in ſucceſſion from the time of the Apoſtles to the preſent

* Vide CHILLINGWORTH'S Works, fol. p. 322.

day, is to be found in the church of England, in the epiſcopal church of Scotland, and in that of Ireland. In STOWE's *Survey of London* are to be found all the names of the biſhops of London, from his time upwards, as far as our hiſtory reaches; and from STOWE's time down to the preſent period the epiſcopal ſucceſſion is eaſy to be aſcertained. The objections againſt epiſcopal ſucceſſion, from the caſe of Archbiſhop SECKER, and the nonjurors, do not eſtabliſh the point for which they have been brought. Schiſmatical baptiſm, admitting the baptiſm of the Archbiſhop to have been of that kind, does not invalidate epiſcopal ſucceſſion. A biſhop, duly conſecrated, is a *regular biſhop*; conſequently, the ſacraments adminiſtered by him, and by thoſe commiſſioned by him, are *valid ſacraments*. Rules are made for *general* caſes; and whoever treats extreme caſes as if they were ordinary, or from one exception attempts to ſet aſide a general concluſion, will ever involve himſelf in difficulties. Contending, as I do, on ground that cannot be ſhaken, that if the baptiſm of the excellent archbiſhop was, as you ſuppoſe it to have been, it neither invalidated his epiſcopal character with which he was regularly inveſted, nor of courſe any of the conſecrations derived through him; I can-

not but conclude it to be ſufficiently proved, that there is no flaw in the epiſcopal character of any of the reſpectable men now inveſted with it.

In anſwer to what you ſay, page 14, "that in England, at this preſent hour, there are, or at leaſt were within theſe few years, three claſſes of biſhops, all claiming what each thinks the beſt right to the ſame biſhopricks;" I have yet to add ſome brief remarks.

The nonjurors, it is to be obſerved, never did conſecrate a biſhop over any dioceſe. On the contrary, they purpoſely abſtained from ſo doing, that no freſh difficulties might ariſe, to prevent the cloſing of what they conſidered to be a lamentable ſchiſm. In 1691 Archbiſhop SANCROFT was deprived. On the 9th of February, 1691-2, he appointed LLOYD, the deprived biſhop of Norwich, his ſubſtitute, to tranſact all buſineſs incumbent on him, and with full powers to conſecrate other biſhops. About a year after this event, the Archbiſhop recommended Dr. GEORGE HICKES, the deprived dean of Worceſter, to be a biſhop, with the ſuffragan title of *Thetford;* as LLOYD of Norwich did Mr. THOMAS WAGSTAFFE, with the title of *Ipſwich*. In ſubſequent conſecrations, even ſuffragan titles were, I believe,

among the nonjurors laid aſide. Among the Papiſts I underſtand they are ſtill retained. But how do theſe uneſſential circumſtances, admitting them all in their utmoſt extent, affect the epiſcopal character of any or of all theſe ſeveral claimants; or in any degree invalidate the epiſcopal functions, which they reſpectively perform among thoſe over whom they preſide? Are you to be reminded, (for I cannot ſuppoſe it neceſſary to inform you) that what you call *biſhopricks*, as now conſtituted and ſettled by the law of the land, relate chiefly, if not ſolely, to the temporal character of a biſhop? The ſpiritual character of a biſhop, and his particular local juriſdiction, have been, at different times and under different circumſtances, ſeparated from each other, without the conſequent deſtruction of either. A man, at leaſt as to all the ſpiritual part of his character, the only part that our argument calls on us now to conſider, may be a true biſhop; whether he has or has not any particular diſtrict, over which he is authoriſed to preſide. Such, in a theological ſenſe, I conceive the nonjuring biſhops were, and Popiſh biſhops in this country actually are. The latter being alſo what is called *titular biſhops*, may, if you pleaſe, be an abſurdity; but certainly it does not invalidate

their epiſcopal function, regarded as their *perſonal office*; although, when conſidered in their connexion with this country, it furniſhes them with no warrant, as *conſtitutional biſhops*, for the diſcharge of it. It ſhould at the ſame time be remembered, Sir, that to claim, and to prove a right to the thing claimed, are two very different things: nor can you argue ſo illogically as to infer, that becauſe ſeveral different claims to the ſame biſhopric are ſet up, therefore no true claim can be eſtabliſhed.

To proceed: It has been obſerved, that to judge from what you and I have written on the ſubject of the church, it ſhould appear, that we have two very different ſubjects in view. My book profeſſes to treat of the church, as a *viſible ſociety*, ſubject to human government. Your definitions of the church chiefly belong to it as an *inviſible ſociety*. Our premiſes, therefore, being different, it is not to be expected that our concluſions ſhould agree. There is one definition, however, to which we both ſubſcribe; namely, that which in page 24 you have taken from the Nineteenth Article; where we read, "that the *viſible church* of CHRIST is a congregation of faithful people, in which the pure word of GOD is preached, and the ſacraments be *duly adminiſtered*, according

to CHRIST's ordinance." The catechiſm teaches, that theſe ſacraments are generally *neceſſary to ſalvation*. How then, it may be aſked, can theſe ſo neceſſary ſacraments be duly adminiſtered, but by perſons authoriſed to adminiſter them, by a commiſſion regularly derived from their Divine Inſtitutor? It might indeed be ſuppoſed, that the hiſtory of PHILIP the deacon, who, though full of the Holy Ghoſt, after having converted and baptiſed the inhabitants of Samaria, left their confirmation, as an act which exceeded the limits of his office, to be performed by thoſe ſuperior miniſters to whom it belonged; compared with the caſes of NADAB and ABIHU, (Leviticus x.) of KORAH, DATHAN, and ABIRAM, (Numbers xvi.) of SAUL, (1 SAMUEL xiii.) of UZZA, (1 Chronicles xiii.) and of the ſons of SCEVA, (Acts xix.) ſhould prevent every man from preſuming to act as a miniſter of GOD, without being lawfully ordained thereto; and if ſo ordained, from exceeding the limits of his office.

I paſs on to the quotation, made in page 27, from Lord BACON, with the view of giving the reader what you call his lordſhip's "*definitive* deſcription of the true church." 'There is (ſays his Lordſhip) an univerſal Catholic church of GOD, diſperſed over

the face of the earth, which is CHRIST's ſpouſe, and CHRIST's body; being gathered of the fathers of the old world, of the church of the Jews, of the ſpirits of the faithful diſſolved, and of the ſpirits of the faithful militant, and of the names yet to be born, which are already written in the book of life." Theſe are certainly Lord BACON's words: but to put the reader in poſſeſſion of his Lordſhip's full ſentiments upon the general ſubject of the church, what immediately follows ſhould have been added. "That there is alſo a *viſible* church, diſtinguiſhed by the outward works of GOD's covenant, and the receiving of the holy doctrine, with the uſe of the myſteries of GOD, and the invocation and ſanctification of his holy name. That there is alſo an holy ſucceſſion in the prophets of the New Teſtament, and fathers of the church, from the time of the Apoſtles and Diſciples, which ſaw our Saviour in the fleſh, unto the conſummation of the work of the miniſtry; which perſons are called from GOD by gift, or inward anointing, and the vocation of GOD, followed by an *outward calling, and ordination of the church.*"*

* Lord BACON's Confeſſion of Faith.

From the whole of the foregoing extract taken together, his Lordſhip appears to have entertained a diſtinct idea upon the ſubject of the church, both as an *inviſible* and *viſible* ſociety: you have made uſe of his Lordſhip's authority, ſo far as it applies to the *inviſible church*, leaving the reader to conclude, that ſuch was the only idea entertained by him on this ſubject. This is indeed not *miſquoting*, but it is what may be called *half quoting*. It is the truth, but not the *whole truth*. It is not that *full* evidence, which ought to be given in the court of letters.

In your ſecond letter it is obſerved, that I have miſtaken Mr. WILBERFORCE in his idea about what faith is; page 45. The objection made in my book was not ſo much to Mr. WILBERFORCE's idea of what faith is, (for on that head I flattered myſelf there was in reality no difference of opinion between us) but to his manner of deſcribing that idea, as calculated, *me judice*, to lead ſome readers to a concluſion, which Mr. WILBERFORCE himſelf could not mean ſhould be drawn from his premiſes. To Mr. WILBERFORCE's mode of expreſſing himſelf on this delicate ſubject, in ſome parts of his valuable publication, I ſtill object; as calculated to promote (what I give that gentleman credit for not wiſhing to promote)

the cauſe of enthuſiaſm, rather than that of Evangelical truth: at the ſame time I feel myſelf bound to do juſtice to ſome other parts of his work, which ſeem purpoſely deſigned to guard againſt ſuch abuſe. But you go on to ſay, that Mr. WILBERFORCE, when ſpeaking of *faith*, (as well as the church of England) always means, that "it is the firſt radical grace of the Holy Spirit, which takes place in the heart of a ſinner, and which brings with it pardon, reconciliation, and repentance, and *never can exiſt, without producing the radical fruits of holineſs.*" Page 45. The church of England no where, that I know of, ſpeaks the language that you make her and Mr. WILBERFORCE ſpeak, in the paſſage before us. She no where deſcribes faith (abſtractedly taken) as *never* exiſting, without producing the Evangelical fruits of holineſs. In our liturgy, repentance, faith, and obedience, are repreſented as *diſtinct* things; and conſequently not ſo *neceſſarily* connected, that one may not exiſt, in ſome degree, without the other. In our church catechiſm repentance and faith are ſeparately deſcribed; the one implying "the *forſaking of ſin*; the other, *the ſtedfaſt belief of the promiſes of* GOD *made in the ſacrament of baptiſm.*" But to theſe preliminaries of man's ſalvation, if they may be ſo

called, muſt be alſo added the fruits of obedience to the holy will and commandments of GOD, which Chriſtians are enabled to bring forth by the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, on the proper uſe of the means of grace appointed for that purpoſe. In page 44, you have brought two quotations, one from ST. AUGUSTINE, the other from Biſhop BEVERIDGE, to prove *in your ſenſe*, what I venture to ſay thoſe great men never meant ſhould be proved from them, namely, that good works are the effect of juſtification, and not the qualification for it. It is unneceſſary to detain you on this beaten ground, becauſe, I truſt, it has already been made appear, that good works are to be ſeen in both lights; as the effect of juſtification, and the qualification for it; as both following after juſtification in one ſenſe, and going before it in another. Good works follow after man's *firſt* juſtification, becauſe man can do no good works, before he is brought acquainted with the principle, upon which alone good works can be done: in that ſenſe, they may be conſidered as an effect, proceeding from a cauſe. But good works muſt alſo go before man's *final* juſtification, otherwiſe man can perform no good works at all: in that ſenſe, they may be conſidered as a qualification, preparatory to an event.

Without oppoſing, therefore, what I conceive to be the ſenſe of thoſe great men, to whoſe authority you appeal, I decidedly proteſt againſt the concluſion you have drawn from them. *"There is no proteſtant but believes faith, repentance, and univerſal obedience, are neceſſary to the obtaining GOD's favour, and eternal happineſs. This being granted, the reſt is but a ſpeculative controverſy, a queſtion about words, which would quickly vaniſh, but that men affect not to underſtand one other. There is no proteſtant but requires to juſtification, remiſſion of ſins; and to remiſſion of ſins, they all require repentance; and repentance, I preſume, may not be denied the name of a *good work*, being indeed, if rightly underſtood, and according to the ſenſe of the word in ſcripture, an effectual converſion from all ſin to all holineſs. They have great reaſon to believe the doctrine of juſtification by faith only, as a point of great weight and importance, if it be rightly underſtood; that is, they have reaſon to eſteem it a principal and neceſſary duty of a Chriſtian, to place his hope of juſtification and ſalvation, not in the perfection of his own righteouſneſs, which, if it be imperfect,

* See CHILLINGWORTH, fol. page 32, 33.

will not juſtify, (I ſhould rather ſay, not in his own righteouſneſs, which, being imperfect, cannot juſtify) but only in the mercies of GOD, through CHRIST's ſatisfaction; and yet, notwithſtanding this, nay the rather for this, may preſerve themſelves in the right temper of good Chriſtians, which is a happy mixture and ſweet compoſition of confidence and fear. If this doctrine be otherwiſe expounded, I will not undertake the juſtification of it; only I will ſay, that I never knew any proteſtant ſuch a *ſolifidian*, but that he did believe theſe Divine truths—*That he muſt make his calling certain by good works; that he muſt work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling*;—and that while he does not ſo, he can have no well-grounded hope of ſalvation. I ſay, I never met with any one, who did not believe theſe Divine truths; and that with a more firm and with a more unſhaken aſſent, than he does that himſelf is *predeſtinate*; and that he is juſtified, by believing himſelf juſtified. I never met with any ſuch who, if he ſaw there was a neceſſity to do either, would not rather forego his belief of theſe doctrines than the former: theſe which he ſees diſputed, and contradicted, and oppoſed with a great multitude of very potent arguments; than thoſe which, being the expreſs words of ſcripture, whoſo-

ever ſhould call in queſtion, could not with any modeſty pretend to the title of Chriſtian."

The idea, that where the root exiſts, the proper fruit will be produced, is contradicted by fact and experience. All trees in a living ſtate do not produce fruit. Faith, though not in an actually dead ſtate, may be alive to no ſaving purpoſe. In our Saviour's parable of the fig-tree, the lord of the vineyard is deſcribed as coming three years ſeeking fruit, and finding none. Had the tree been *actually dead*, no fruit could have been expected from it; but becauſe its *root did exiſt*, the tree was alive, and the branches unfruitful, therefore was the ſentence pronounced againſt it. The general tenour of ſcripture accords with this figurative repreſentation of the ſtate of the Jewiſh nation, which authoriſes us to diſcriminate between *fruitful* and *unfruitful* faith; to the want of which neceſſary diſcrimination, all the diſputes on this ſubject are to be attributed.

The doctrine of faith without works has indeed of late years been put out of countenance: but though it does not appear ſo openly among Chriſtians as it once did, it is ſtill, I fear, making its way in diſguiſe. A doctrine nearly related to it is at this day propagated, incompatible, if I underſtand it, with the grand

œconomy of man's ſalvation: I mean that doctrine which repreſents the fruits of holineſs as the *neceſſary* produce of Chriſtian faith. Perſons who profeſs to write againſt the groſs corruption of *Antinomianiſm*, may unintentionally promote it, by adopting a mode of reconciling the two Apoſtles ST. PAUL and ST. JAMES, to which the Apoſtles themſelves would not ſubſcribe. If, with the view of doing honour to faith, as the root or foundation of Chriſtian practice, becauſe no Chriſtian practice can exiſt independent of it, the fruits of holineſs are to be conſidered as its *neceſſary* produce; not only a great part of ST. PAUL's writings would be without meaning, but the ſuppoſed attempt of ST. JAMES, to counteract the wrong concluſions that might be drawn from ſome parts of them, taken unconnectedly, would have been uſeleſs, becauſe in ſuch caſe no ſuch concluſion could have been drawn.

According to the plauſible idea adopted on this ſubject, which, as it ſtrikes me, ſubſtitutes one erroneous doctrine for another, the duties of Chriſtianity are repreſented as growing out of the doctrines of it, "as the *natural* and *neceſſary* productions of ſuch a living root." The fallacy in this caſe proceeds from a ſcripture alluſion being taken in a too literal ſenſe. Alluſions are made uſe of to convey ſome ſimilitude,

not an exact repreſentation of the ſubject in queſtion. "A tree will produce according to its kind, by a merely *phyſical* reſult, if no impediment take place, Faith alſo will produce its own effects, if no *moral* hindrance ſhall prevail. But the obvious difference between merely *natural* reſults, and thoſe which are of a moral nature, muſt be conſtantly remembered. Extend the compariſon to thoſe parts which are unlike in the ſeveral ſubjects, and you confound their natures; and the conſequences will be moſt groſs and erroneous."* The duties of Chriſtianity muſt grow out of the doctrines of it, or they would not be *Chriſtian duties*: but they certainly are not the *neceſſary* production of thoſe doctrines; if they were, then every one who had the doctrines of Chriſtianity in his head, muſt conſequently have the duties of Chriſtianity in his practice. Sad experience, however, tells us, that this is too often not the caſe. ST. PAUL in his epiſtles proceeds like a wiſe maſter-builder, by laying his foundation in CHRIST, as the only foundation upon which Chriſtian practice can be built. But had he conſidered that the doctrinal leſſon contained chiefly in the firſt part of his epiſtles, muſt

* Conſiderations on the Chriſtian Covenant, by Archdeacon POTT, p. 100.

neceſſarily produce its practical effects, the concluſion of his epiſtle had in a great degree been unneceſſary. His having, therefore, ſubjoined a *practical* leſſon to his *doctrinal* one, proves that he did not conſider the one as *neceſſarily* growing out of the other, "juſt as (we are told) any other conſequence grows out of its cauſe." In fact he knew, that although Chriſtian doctrine conſtituted the only foundation for Chriſtian practice, he knew at the ſame time that they were not ſo inſeparably connected, that the latter was a *neceſſary* conſequence of the former; otherwiſe, after having laid before his diſciples the particulars of the Chriſtian doctrine, he would not, it is probable, have thus concluded his important leſſon: "I beſeech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of GOD, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD." Rom. xii. 1. Or, as he has ſtill more ſtrongly concluded in his ſecond epiſtle to the Corinthians, chap. vii. "Having, therefore, theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of GOD."

Cauſe and effect in the regular courſe of nature are correlative terms, being connected together by an inſeparable bond of union. Nevertheleſs, as the

moral and phyſical world are not governed by the ſame neceſſary laws, a ſtrict correſpondence between them is not to be expected. Faith and works may, in ſome ſenſe, be conſidered as correlative terms, and as ſuch they ought not to be ſeparated. But the two words, *ought not* and *cannot*, convey two very different meanings. It is ſurely a different thing to ſay, that faith and works *ought not* to be ſeparated, becauſe perfect Chriſtianity depends upon their conſtant connexion; and to ſay that the union between them is *indiviſible*. Had ST. PAUL thought ſo, inſtead of making the promiſes of the Goſpel the ground of his argument for human exertion in the work of ſalvation, by beſeeching his diſciples to "preſent their bodies a living ſacrifice, acceptable to GOD;" as if he had ſaid, ſeeing, my brethren, ſuch promiſes of ſalvation have been made to you through JESUS CHRIST, *therefore*, on this ground of hope, in the confidence that your labour will not be vain in the LORD, let me beſeech you ſo to make uſe of the grace of GOD, that "ye may thereby become meet to be partakers with the ſaints in light;" the language of the Apoſtle ought to have been this: "Having, therefore, theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let me beſeech you" to receive them in faith; in ſuch caſe I ſhall have to

congratulate you upon the certain effect that will be produced by them, as the conſequence *neceſſarily* growing out of its cauſe; in ſuch caſe you will be cleanſed from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and your bodies will be preſented a living ſacrifice, acceptable to GOD. An idea which, it will be readily perceived, the words of ST. PAUL were not deſigned to convey. PAUL did not, therefore, ſuſpect that the *indiviſible* union between faith and works might "*poſſibly be overlooked*;"* becauſe, if I underſtand him, he did not conſider that any ſuch union exiſted. The object of his addreſs to his diſciples was, to prevent them from ſeparating what, according to the Divine œconomy of man's ſalvation, it was intended ſhould always be joined together; and thus, by having the grace of GOD beſtowed on them in vain, rendering the promiſes of the Goſpel of none effect. "Theſe

* Strictures on the Modern Syſtem of Female Education, by HANNAH MORE. No one who regards this lady with the reſpect to which ſhe is entitled, from her zeal for the honour of GOD, and the welfare of the community, but muſt remark with reluctance, that in writings confeſſedly containing ſo much of what is excellent and truly ſpiritual, any doctrine ſhould be met with not perfectly ſound. Would this lady take the trouble to conſult the learned HAMMOND, ſhe would be convinced, I flatter myſelf, that the paraphraſe annexed by him to the text in queſtion, does more juſtice to the Apoſtle's argument, than does the concluſion which ſhe herſelf has inadvertently drawn from it.

things I will (ſaid ST. PAUL, in his directions to TITUS) that thou affirm conſtantly, as a matter of moſt eſſential importance, that they which have believed in GOD might be careful to maintain good works. Theſe things are good and profitable unto men." Indeed, was the general tenour of ST. PAUL's writings duly attended to, we ſhould not have his authority brought forward in ſupport of a doctrine, which, though it does not openly preach Antinomianiſm, will, it is to be feared, inſenſibly promote it.

In page 52 you bring forward the celebrated Biſhop of Meaux, for the ſake of impreſſing upon the reader's mind the idea, that whilſt, according to your opinion, I differ from Mr. WILBERFORCE, and the church of England, on the ſubject of faith, there is an exact conformity between my doctrine and that of this renowned Popiſh champion. To this I ſhall only anſwer, that I have not been in the habit of conſidering a Roman Catholic to be *no Chriſtian*, becauſe he is a *Roman Catholic*. On the contrary, I conſider that Roman Catholics hold the fundamental doctrines of Chriſtianity in greater purity than ſome proteſtants. Nor ſhould it be forgotten, for how much of our excellent liturgy we are indebted to men who were Catholics; a circumſtance which, ſo far

from being thought in any reſpect derogatory has generally been regarded as a pleaſing proof venerable antiquity.

Many uninformed perſons are led into error b word PROTESTANT. We talk of the PROTEST religion and the *Proteſtant* faith, as if the *reli* and faith of a proteſtant were eſſentially and tot different from thoſe of the Roman Catholic. Whe it ſhould be remembered, that in the moſt *eſſen* articles of the Chriſtian faith the church of Engl and the church of Rome are agreed. Their di greement reſpects thoſe errors and corruptions whi have been ſuperadded by the Romiſh church *to t* original doctrines of Chriſtianity, in the rejectio of which errors and corruptions the proteſtantiſm o the church of England conſiſts. To the quotatio from the Biſhop of Meaux I readily ſubſcribe, *a* containing what I underſtand to be ſound divinity. The doctrine you have oppoſed to it is not to be found any where in the Bible. So long as the Spirit dwells in the human heart, the fruits of *the Spirit* will be produced. But as the Spirit may be *quenched*, (1 Theſſ. v. 19) and *grieved*, (Eph. iv. 30) and in conſequence provoked to leave his abode; no man can be ſaid to be *completely* juſtified, till he *ſhall be*

...rally juſtified. But upon this head more, perhaps, ...s been already ſaid than was neceſſary. I there-re proceed.

In page 60 you ſay, that "upon the authority of ...e royal declaration prefixed to the articles, we are ...intly agreed, that they muſt be taken in their *...ain, literal, grammatical* ſenſe." Granting your premiſes, our concluſion will ſtill be different. According to your judgment, the *Calviniſtic* ſenſe of the articles is their *plain, literal, grammatical* ſenſe. But ſo far from finding this point eſtabliſhed by the declaration in queſtion, there is reaſon to think that no ſuch point was meant to be eſtabliſhed by it.* In the firſt place, the declaration was made by King JAMES the Firſt, who did not himſelf ſee the Seventeenth Article in the Calviniſtic ſenſe in which you receive it; therefore that ſenſe was not by him underſtood to be the *plain, literal, grammatical* ſenſe of the article to which it is prefixed. And ſhould I even admit the juſtneſs of the inference drawn by BURNET† from this declaration, that the Seventeenth Article "is conceived in ſuch general words, that it

* The reader will ſee this point fully made out in "Vindiciæ Eccleſiæ Anglicanæ," chap. ii. ſect. 1.

† BURNET's Expoſition, fol. p. 8.

can admit of different literal, grammatical ſenſes, even when the ſenſes given are plainly contrary to each other;" I, as an anti-Calviniſt, ſhould ſtand as fully juſtified in my ſubſcription as you can be in yours. But *my* poſition is this; the declaration here referred to, if I underſtand it, was meant to guard againſt the abuſe that had been made of the ſcripture language, in which the Seventeenth Article is compoſed, by diſcountenancing that very ſenſe for which you are ſo ſtrong an advocate; where, alluding to the unhappy differences that had been raiſed about the doctrine of abſolute decrees, election, &c. it proceeds thus: "We will, that all further curious ſearch be laid aſide, and theſe diſputes ſhut up in GOD's promiſes, as they are *generally* ſet forth to us in the holy ſcriptures, and the *general* meaning of the articles," &c.; which *general* promiſes and *general* meaning are certainly inconſiſtent with what you conceive to be the *plain, literal, grammatical* ſenſe of the article in queſtion. In ſhort, upon the ſame principle that you expect me to receive the Calviniſtic ſenſe, becauſe it is the plain, literal, grammatical ſenſe of the Seventeenth Article, according to your reading; the Roman Catholic may call on you to admit the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, from the authority of the ſixth

chapter of ST. JOHN's Goſpel, according to his reading. The only difference I ſee between the two caſes is this: whilſt you are called on to believe againſt the teſtimony of your ſenſes, I am expected to do it againſt the conviction of my underſtanding, founded upon the general tenour of ſcripture.

In page 63, ſpeaking of one of GOD's elect, you ſay, "he walks (as concludes the Seventeenth Article) religiouſly in good works," &c. Theſe words do not conſtitute the concluſion of the Seventeenth Article, but are to be found in the middle of it; and ſubjoined to them, the article contains matter which challenges moſt ſerious conſideration. But there are three ſmall words in the beginning of this article, of which you take no notice, and which to me appear to be of eſſential importance. Theſe words are "*ſecret to us.*" Of GOD's *foreknowledge* there can be no doubt, though the word itſelf does not properly apply to the DEITY. For that Being to whom all things are preſent, cannot, ſtrictly ſpeaking, be ſaid to *foreknow* any thing. But if his purpoſe to deliver from damnation thoſe whom He hath choſen, "*be ſecret to us*," ſurely it becomes us to work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling, rather than preſume to ſay or think that *we* are choſen or predeſtinated to be holy,

and without blame, and that our election is ſure, as you give the reader to underſtand in page 62. Permit me to aſk, what can be thoſe *tokens* which can ſhew us what is *ſecret to us?* and whether this confidence of ſalvation, which even the greateſt ſaints have not poſſeſſed, does not favour more of ſpiritual pride, than of that lowlineſs of mind which manifeſts itſelf in an acknowledgment of their own unworthineſs, and a continual ſuing for mercy through the merits, and for the ſake of, a crucified Redeemer. The Chriſtian is directed "not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think *ſoberly*." Rom. xii. 3.

On what you are pleaſed to call my *novel* opinion of a conditional ſalvation, page 64, I have to add to what has been already ſaid, that this doctrine is at leaſt as old as the world. ADAM was placed in a ſtate of conditional ſalvation in Paradiſe. A ſimilar plan of conditional ſalvation, though upon more gracious terms, was adopted under the new covenant. Our Saviour's anſwer to the young man, who enquired what good thing he ſhould do that he might have eternal life, was this; "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." MATT. xix. 17. ST. JOHN, as if for the expreſs purpoſe of prevent-

ing all poſſible miſconception upon this important ſubject, has placed it before us in a negative as well as poſitive ſenſe. "If we ſay that we have fellowſhip with him," that we are partakers of his ſpirit, and as ſuch ſecure of the promiſes of the Goſpel, and yet at the ſame time walk in darkneſs, live in wilful ſin, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light; if we are holy, as he is holy, though not in degree, yet in ſincerity of deſire and imitation, this is indeed a certain ſign, that we have fellowſhip one with another; we with GOD, by partaking of his ſpirit, and ſo GOD with us; and being thus ſanctified by the Holy Spirit to a ſincere obedience of the Goſpel, we partake of that merciful bleſſing of the Goſpel covenant, promiſed to us on GOD's part, namely, "the blood of CHRIST, which cleanſeth from all ſin." 1 JOHN i. 6, 7. In a word, Sir, this doctrine, to which you ſo loudly object, is the doctrine of the Bible, from Geneſis to Revelations; in the laſt chapter of which we are given to underſtand, that though a man's name ſhall (to make uſe of the ſcripture language) be written in the book of life, its continuance there will depend upon his own conduct. "If any man ſhall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy,

God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life." Revel. xxii. 19. Were it neceſſary to add to what has been already ſaid on your favourite poſition, that the ſalvation of the elect muſt be ſecure, becauſe they cannot finally fall from grace, I might take occaſion to enlarge upon the caſe of JUDAS, which to me appears ſtrictly in point. He was one of the twelve, elected by GOD for a very important purpoſe. In that character our Saviour prays for him, in common with the other Apoſtles. "I pray for them which thou haſt given me, *for they are thine:* thine they were, and thou gaveſt them to me: while I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: thoſe that thou gaveſt me I have kept, and none of them is loſt, but the ſon of perdition." JOHN xvii. 6, &c. The name of JUDAS brings to my recollection an obſervation made upon this ſubject by a very high Calviniſt, which affords a ſtriking ſpecimen of the weakneſs of a cauſe, which has recourſe to ſuch an argument for its ſupport. Speaking of that paſſage of LATIMER, where he ſays, that CHRIST ſhed as much blood for JUDAS as for PETER, Mr. TOPLADY obſerves thus: "Not that CHRIST actually died for JUDAS, (whoſe death was *prior* to that of CHRIST himſelf) but that the Mediator's blood was as much

ſufficient (ſo infinite was its value) to have redeemed even JUDAS, as to have redeemed any other perſon, had it been ſhed for that purpoſe. The tenet of a redemption abſolutely univerſal will not bear the teſt of ſcripture, reaſon, or the analogy of faith. Shall we, for example, affirm that CHRIST died for the ſalvation of JUDAS? The fact ſeems impoſſible! 'Tis plain that JUDAS ſlew himſelf *ſubſequently* to the apprehenſion, but *antecedently* to the actual crucifixion, of CHRIST. The ſoul of JUDAS, therefore, went to its own place of puniſhment, before CHRIST had offered himſelf in ſacrifice to GOD." *Ergo*——

Were Mr. TOPLADY's argument on this ſubject as ſtrong, as it is confeſſedly weak, it could not ſupport a poſition in itſelf unſcriptural. Mr. TOPLADY indeed ſays, that the tenet of an univerſal redemption will not bear the teſt of ſcripture. ST. PAUL urges our Saviour's death, to prove the extent of the death of ADAM. "If one died for all, then were all dead." 2 Cor. v. 14. In another part of his writings, he ſays expreſsly, that JESUS taſted death "for *every man*." Heb. ii. 9. The concluſion need not be pointed out. It muſt be obſerved, however, in juſtice to the character of a very zealous miniſter, that it is probable Mr. TOPLADY's ideas on this ſubject were

more correct than his expreſſions; and that it is to his not having properly diſcriminated in this caſe between the general redemption of mankind by JESUS CHRIST and the final ſalvation of the individual ſinner, that the apparent contradiction between his language and that of ST. PAUL is to be attributed.

The deliverance of the Iſraelites out of Egypt has been called *redemption*, Exod. vi. 6, Deut. vii. 8; and has been thought not only analogous to, but typical of, the great redemption wrought by the death of CHRIST, upon the footing of the Apoſtle's application, 1 Cor. x. 1, 13; where, after telling thoſe he wrote to, that all our fathers were baptiſed unto MOSES in the cloud and in the ſea, and did *all* eat the ſame ſpiritual meat, and did *all* drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them, and *that rock was CHRIST*—he immediately adds, "but with *many* of them GOD was not *pleaſed*, for they were overthrown in the wilderneſs." Now here is an exact parallel of the caſe before us. Here is *univerſal* redemption, and but *partial* ſalvation; the cauſes of which are ſpecified, verſe 7, 8, 9, 10. And to bring all home to our Chriſtian caſe, the Apoſtle twice, verſe 6, 11, calls theſe things "types" to us; and ſays "they

were written for our admonition," with this particular view among others, "that he who thinketh he *ſtandeth*, might take heed leaſt he *fall*." verſe 12. Can any one deſire a clearer illuſtration of the ſubject in hand, or wiſh for a more ſatisfactory ſolution of this difficulty, ſo artfully raiſed about *univerſal* redemption, than the draught which the Apoſtle has here laid before us? But the misfortune is, that a prevailing attachment to ſyſtems of modern compoſition has brought on, I ſhall not ſay a total rejection, but at leaſt a ſtrange forgetfulneſs of the ſcripture ſyſtem of Chriſtianity, which yet all join in acknowledging to be the true one. Certain it is, that ſcripture declares Chriſtianity to be a great myſtery, founded on the myſterious doctrine of a trinity of perſons in one JEHOVAH; and in particular in GOD (one of theſe perſons) manifeſted in the fleſh, and ſo become CHRIST, from whom this myſterious ſyſtem has received its appellation; Acts xi. 26. It declares further, that the ſalvation of man is a pre-concerted ſcheme of love and mercy, TIT. i. 2; by the eternal covenant in and of JEHOVAH, not *with*, but *for* man; and it expreſſes, in terms ſufficiently adequate to our weak capacities, the ſeveral parts which the Three Great Ones, and man too, as the happy object of all,

have to act in this bleſſed ſcheme, as it is compendiouſly delineated by a venerable father of the primitive church, good old IRÆNEUS of Lyons:—"The Spirit operating, the Son adminiſtering, the Father approving, man conſummating unto ſalvation." Book iv. cap. 37. And again; "The Father well pleaſed, the Son adminiſtering and forming, the Spirit nouriſhing and increaſing, man himſelf gradually profiting and attaining towards perfection." Cap. 75. Such is the ſcripture repreſentation of this beautiful plan.

No Chriſtian, it is preſumed, denies either the omniſcience or omnipotence of the Divine Being, or that all things both in heaven and earth are under his controul and direction. But, allowing that GOD does in ſome ſenſe decree things, will it follow from thence that his decrees are of that *abſolute* kind, as to exclude all contingency of human events? Your decided poſitions on this ſubject are drawn from a conception, formed on a myſterious ſubject, beyond the reach of a finite underſtanding, and upon which man can know no more than GOD has been pleaſed to reveal. The only idea preſented to my mind upon this ſubject is drawn from thoſe facts recorded in ſacred ſtory, which authoriſe the concluſion, that ſome of GOD's decrees at leaſt are in a degree

of ſubſerviency to human actions. Striking facts of this kind occur in the caſe of AHAB, 1 Kings xxi. 29; in that of HEZEKIAH, ISAIAH xxxviii. 5; and in that of Nineveh, JONAH iii. 10; in all which caſes the Divine decree was altered, by the ſubſequent conduct of the party concerned in it. The caſe of BENHADAD king of Syria, 2 Kings viii. 10, furniſhes a ſtriking ſpecimen of the conſiſtency of the foreknowledge of GOD with the contingency of human events. The prophet's anſwer to HAZAEL's enquiry reſpecting BENHADAD's recovery was this: "Go, and ſay unto him, thou *mayeſt certainly* recover; howbeit the LORD hath ſhewed me, he ſhall ſurely die." Means there were, which had they been made uſe of, would certainly have effected the cure: GOD ſaw they would not be employed. In the caſe of ST. PAUL's ſhipwreck, which has been already mentioned, the certainty of eſcaping from it was connected with the poſſibility of the proper means not being made uſe of for that purpoſe; otherwiſe ST. PAUL's addreſs to the ſailors on the ſubject had been unneceſſary; the means were made uſe of, and the crew conſequently ſaved. If Sir, from facts recorded in ſacred ſtory, we are authoriſed to ſay, that in ſome inſtances GOD has thought fit to make his

decrees ſubſervient to the actions of men, do we, as you ſuggeſt, thereby deny Him the right of a ſovereign? Should not poor ſhort-ſighted mortals rather leave GOD to govern the world in his own way, without preſuming to form any judgment upon his proceedings, further than He has been pleaſed to furniſh documents for the purpoſe? So long as we keep to the letter of the ſcripture, we tread on ſafe ground; when we ſpeculate beyond it, we plunge into a depth which man has no line to fathom.

It is not denied, that when GOD pleaſes, He can direct the actions of wicked men to ſome particular purpoſe. We know that He both can and does. But as GOD has not been pleaſed to make man his counſellor, we therefore leave this buſineſs in his hands, confident, that a time will come when GOD will be juſtified in all his ways. We bow to what we cannot underſtand. In the words of the late Dr. OGDEN, "ſilence ſuits with ignorance."

But when, in page 73, you go further, and give the reader to underſtand, that GOD's poſitive decree ſo overrules human agency in the uſe of the means, as to render man a mere machine, I am bound to oppoſe ſuch doctrine; becauſe ſuch doctrine is contrary to the whole tenour of ſcripture, where rewards

are conſtantly promiſed to thoſe who obey, and puniſhments denounced againſt thoſe who do not. To bring forward proofs on this ſubject would be an endleſs undertaking; at the ſame time that it muſt be an unneceſſary one for all thoſe who have not laid aſide the uſe of their Bibles. I ſhall, therefore, only take notice of one particular paſſage of ſcripture, which, from the authority of our SAVIOUR, proves to demonſtration, that this ſuppoſed overruling will of the DEITY, reſpecting the ſalvation of individuals, does not conſtitute a part of the Divine plan. "Theſe things, I ſay, (ſays CHRIST, ſpeaking to the Jews) *that ye might be ſaved.* But ye *will not come* unto me that ye may have life." JOHN v. 34, 40. The former of theſe two verſes plainly ſhews, (by the particle *ινα*, which is *αιτιατικον*, or what marks the *final cauſe* of the foregoing words) that our SAVIOUR did not only offer, but intend the ſalvation of the Jews; whilſt the latter verſe ſhews as plainly that the Jews refuſed it.

"You can form (you ſay, in your preface to Biſhop BABINGTON's ſermon) no idea of grace, but as it conquers whatever oppoſes its progreſs." In other words, grace, according to your idea, muſt be *irreſiſtible*. AUGUSTIN, under whoſe authority you

occaſionally take ſhelter, entertained a different idea upon this ſubject. He ſays, that to believe and to will, are both from GOD and from ourſelves. "They are both from GOD, becauſe it is he that prepares our wills, and they are both from ourſelves; becauſe they are not wrought in us, unleſs we are willing. *Utrumque ipſius eſt, quia ipſe preparat voluntatem; et utrumque noſtrum, quia non fit niſi volentibus nobis.*" As we cannot do good without the ſuggeſtion of GOD's holy Spirit, ſo neither can we do it without our own conſent; and even when we are working according to the Divine impulſe, we have the liberty to work againſt it. Upon no other ground can the juſt diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments ſtand. For we are told, "that when death and hell deliver up their dead, they will be judged, every man according to his works." Rev. xx. 13. But we have a far greater authority than that of ST. AUGUSTIN on this ſubject; I mean that of our bleſſed SAVIOUR, where he ſays, that the Phariſees and lawyers "rejected the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves." LUKE vii. 30. Had GOD eternally decreed their condemnation without reſpect to their offences, they had *complied with his counſel*, by ſetting forward their own condemnation. But our bleſſed SAVIOUR told

NICODEMUS, that "GOD ſent his Son into the world, that the world through him might be ſaved." JOHN iii. 7. The Jews, therefore, as conſtituting part of the world, might have been ſaved, *had they not rejected* the counſel of GOD. Now a rejection on one ſide implies an offer on the other. The grace of ſalvation then was offered to the Jews, but they *rejected* it: as ST. STEPHEN told them, they *reſiſted* the Holy Ghoſt, as their fathers had done before them. Acts vii. 51. From whence we learn, that as GOD hath, what ST. LUKE calls, βελη ωρισμενη, or in the language of JUSTIN MARTYR, εμαρμενη απαραβατος, that is, a purpoſe ſo *determined* as not to be controlled; ſo hath he alſo βελη δυναμενη αθετεισθαι, that is, a purpoſe ſo *conditional*, as in that one ſuppoſition of our impenitence to ſuffer itſelf to be *reſiſted*. Thus GOD purpoſed the repentance and redemption of the Jews; He purpoſed alſo the preaching of JOHN the Baptiſt; the former as the end, the latter as the means conducing to it. GOD's purpoſe of the means was *abſolute* and *irreſiſtible*; but his purpoſe of the end was *conditional*, and therefore *might be reſiſted*. The Phariſees and lawyers could not hinder JOHN the Baptiſt from being a preacher of repentance, but they could and did hinder his ſermons from producing

their intended effect. GOD purpoſed their redemption, on condition of their repentance; and He purpoſed their repentance, on condition they would receive and obſerve the doctrine of JOHN the Baptiſt. They could not obtain the end whilſt they refuſed to uſe the means. By not coming to the baptiſm of JOHN, which was deſigned as preparatory to their admiſſion into the church of CHRIST, they "rejected the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves." And the condemnation which followed was not the effect of an abſolute predetermined purpoſe on GOD's part, but, as our SAVIOUR told NICODEMUS, a conſequence of the wilful rejection of that light which was come into the world.

"Surely then, it is enough (you ſay, in page 79) for us to acknowledge, that all GOD's dealings with the children of men are holy, juſt, and good," &c. In one ſenſe, it is enough that we acknowledge what you have here laid before your reader; in another ſenſe it is not. "It is enough for us to acknowledge, that all GOD's dealings with the children of men are holy, juſt, and good," without attempting to enter into any particular inveſtigation of them; but we muſt acknowledge ſomething more; we muſt acknowledge, that "in that day GOD ſhall judge the

ſecrets of men by JESUS CHRIST." Rom. ii. 16. That in that day we muſt give account "of every idle word that we ſhould ſpeak." MAT. xii. 36. Above all we muſt acknowledge, that in that day "they that have *done good* ſhall come forth to the reſurrection of life, and they that have *done evil* unto the reſurrection of damnation." JOHN v. 29. For thus ſaith he, which hath the keys of hell and death, "I will give unto every one of you according to *your works*." Rev. i. 18; ii. 23.

You obſerve, in page 79, that "difficulties will ariſe in our little minds, when contemplating the plans of Him who is incomprehenſible," &c. Difficulties muſt always occur to finite minds, in the contemplation of infinite ſubjects, for the moſt obvious reaſon; but a great part of ſuch difficulties will be found to ariſe from man's preſuming to ſpeak more deciſively than ſcripture warants him to do, upon things not clearly revealed. When we talk of the *irreſiſtibility* of grace and *irreſpective* decrees, &c. we talk our own language, not that of the Bible. And it is a conſideration which ought to have weight with you as *a Calviniſt*, that the ſober divines of your own party (according to the quotation which you have made from Biſhop SANDERSON) "do not ordinarily

uſe thoſe terms, nor yet well approve of them, unleſs underſtood *cum grano ſalis.*"

It ſurely requires no nice judgment to diſcriminate between the permiſſion of an event, and the abſolute determination of it; nor does there ſeem to be any difficulty in reconciling the foreknowledge of an Omniſcient Being with a certain degree of contingency in human affairs. You obſerve, in page 67, that the crucifixion of our SAVIOUR "was planned and contrived by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of GOD," and appeal for your proof of this poſition to the fourth chapter of the Acts, where the Apoſtles are introduced, telling the Scribes and Phariſees, &c. that the people of Iſrael were gathered together, "for to do whatſoever GOD's hand and GOD's counſel determined before to be done." Acts iv. 28. It was an objection made by TRYPHON to JUSTIN MARTYR, that the MESSIAS was delivered to be crucified "by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of GOD." Acts ii. 23. The inference drawn from which circumſtance was, that GOD was the author of CHRIST's crucifixion, and the Jews only his inſtruments. The anſwer of JUSTIN was to the following purpoſe: that the word rendered *determinate* did not exclude but ſuppoſed *foreknowledge.*

GOD, ſaid he, foreſaw that the Jews would be extremely wicked, but did not determine that ſo they ſhould be.* A ſecond anſwer to this objection is to be taken from the paſſage cited by yourſelf from the fourth chapter of Acts. The Apoſtle did not uſe the words αυτες ποιησαι, but the word γενεσθαι, on this occaſion. GOD determined the thing ſhould be done, but not that the Jews ſhould do it. The benefit of the thing done, namely, the redemption of the world, was matter indeed of GOD's decree; but the guilt by which it was done was the object only of his foreſight. Foreſeeing that the Jews would crucify the SAVIOUR, and that he in his wiſdom could draw light out of darkneſs, by turning their cruelty into an inſtrument of man's ſalvation, GOD did predetermine to *permit* (that is to ſay, not to hinder by any miraculous or extraordinary reſtraint) that they ſhould do ſo great an evil, which He would mercifully govern to ſo great and general a good as ſhould redound even to the Jews themſelves, upon condition of their repentance. From whence it appears, both that the murder of the Prince of Life was not leſs criminal in the parties, by being ordered by GOD to

" * Προεγνωσκεν ο Θεος γενησομενης πονηρας, α τοιαυτας εποιησε." JUST. MART. con. TRYPH. page 370.

man's redemption; and that GOD's deteſtation of it was not the leſs infinite, by his permitting to be done what He ſaw that (of themſelves) the Jews would infallibly do. But in this caſe there was no *neceſſity*; for where there is a neceſſity, there can be no guilt. What you ſay, page 73, that "men do not act the leſs *freely*, becauſe they act *neceſſarily*," is a language I do not underſtand. "Reject the ſcripture, (you ſay, page 85) or receive its teſtimony." There is, I acknowledge, in this caſe, no alternative. But it will not, it is preſumed, be concluded, that I reject the ſcripture, becauſe I chooſe to receive its teſtimony in the ſenſe in which it was received before abſolute decrees and Calviniſtic predeſtination were ever thought of in the world; and in which alone the ſcripture can be reconciled with itſelf.

In a note in page 97, you ſpeak of "an inward experimental conviction, which brings with it an evidence, more forcible than that of the cleareſt logical concluſions." An *inward experimental conviction* is a *ſomething*, that does not admit of a logical anſwer. It is in vain, therefore, to attempt one. But the Apoſtle directs the Chriſtian to "be ready to give a *reaſon* for the faith that is in him." A reaſon may be underſtood; an experimental convic-

tion may not; for it is a thing to be felt, rather than deſcribed. The party himſelf can at no time be ſure that he is not deceived by it. To exchange, therefore, a rational account of our faith for the inward experimental conviction of it, is to ſubſtitute the work of the *imagination* for that of the *judgment*: a proceeding, which opens the door to moſt dangerous and endleſs deluſions.

Upon the ſubject of your fourth letter, I feel no deſire to enlarge. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that the diſtinction you have made between *ſin* and the *ſinner*, contains the very marrow of Antinomianiſm; whilſt your idea of the faithfulneſs of GOD, grounded on the conſideration that the gifts and callings of GOD are without repentance, is certainly not conſonant with ſcripture. The gifts and callings of GOD are without repentance in *one ſenſe*; *in another* they are not. They are without repentance on GOD's part, till ſuch time as the miſconduct on the part of man produces an alteration in the Divine purpoſes. Is GOD *unfaithful* in forſaking the man, who firſt forſakes Him? "Wherefore, the LORD GOD of Iſrael ſaith; I ſaid, indeed, that thy houſe, and the houſe of thy father, ſhould walk before me for ever: but *now* the LORD ſaith, be it far from me;

for them that honour Me, I will honour; and they that deſpiſe Me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed;" &c. 1 SAM. ii. 30. "And he went out to meet ASA, and ſaid unto him, hear me, ASA, and all Judah and Benjamin; the LORD is with you, while ye be with Him: and if ye ſeek Him, He will be found of you: but *if ye forſake* Him, He will forſake you." 2 Chron. xv. 2. "And I will faſten as *a nail in a ſure place*, &c. And they ſhall hang upon him all the glory of his Father's houſe, &c. In that day, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts, *ſhall the nail that is faſtened in a ſure place be removed*, and be cut down, and fall," &c. ISAIAH xxii. 23, &c. The foregoing paſſage is very commonly made uſe of to prove the certainty of the Divine decrees; but in ſuch caſe it is brought forward in a mutilated ſtate. That plain and deciſive paſſage, to be met with in the 18th chapter of EZEKIEL, verſe 20, 21, &c. has been already remarked; it cannot, therefore, be ſuppoſed to have eſcaped the reader's recollection. "Behold, therefore, the goodneſs and ſeverity of GOD! on them which fell, ſeverity; but towards thee goodneſs, *if thou continue in his goodneſs; otherwiſe, thou alſo ſhalt be cut off.*" Rom. xi. 22. "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the

firſt works; or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candleſtick out of his place, except thou repent." Rev. ii. 5.

To proceed: In page 120, you beſeech "me to lay aſide my prejudices againſt ſalvation by grace, and the preachers of it:" and in a note, at the bottom of the page, you give me credit for *moral character* and *knowledge*, by which the reader is given to underſtand, that *ſound divinity* is not to be expected from me.

It is one of the hacknied phraſes of the day, calculated to lead weak people by the ears, and draw them away from the eſtabliſhment, that the clergy of the church are not *Goſpel** miniſters. Whilſt

* "It is not eaſy to ſpeak without ſeverity of a charge ſo deſtitute of truth, and ſo entirely void of charity. In addition to the inconvenience, which ſometimes happens, when important doctrines are ſtated differently in the ſame congregation, the evil muſt become intolerable, when a direct attempt is made to depreciate the miniſtry of a fellow-labourer; to alienate the affections of his flock; and to accuſe him, however pious, orthodox, and learned, of darkening the counſel of GOD. Could it be imagined, that they, whoſe miniſtry is ſo injuriouſly contemned, hold the ſame creed, and preach the ſame Saviour, with their indiſcreet opponents? that they teach to the full as largely the need which all men have of that grace, the iſſues of which CHRIST ſet wide to the world? that they appeal as humbly to his merits, to his atonement, and prevailing interceſſion, as the ground of all their hope, and, with the ſame reverence, regard his word and ſacraments as the pledges of ſalvation?" Archdeacon POTT's Charge, A. D. 1797.

thoſe, whom you diſtinguiſh by the excluſive title of preachers of ſalvation by grace, like the Goſpellers of the laſt century, ſhould rather be called preachers of abſolute decrees, predeſtination, election, and faith without works.

To ſpread or preach the Goſpel has of late years become a favourite topic with a certain claſs of people, who would fain have it believed, that without them there would be no more Goſpel in Britain, than among the wildeſt Indians. But till you have proved the peculiar doctrines of Calviniſm to be the doctrines of the Bible, (which I am inclined to think you never will) you muſt excuſe me if I do not ſubſcribe to the truth of that title, which your favourite preachers arrogate to themſelves.

Salvation by grace, in the proper and ſcriptural ſenſe of the words, will always, I truſt, be preached in the church of England. It is the doctrine of that church; and woe be to thoſe miniſters, who preach it not. I am as much againſt what is not better than *heathen* morality, as any ſelf-conſtituted miſſionary, or any one of your favourite preachers, poſſibly can be. But is there not, Sir, a *Goſpel morality?* And has not JESUS iſſued out *commandments* for his miniſters to teach, as well as doctrines for them to preach? And

what are theſe doctrines, to which the title of *the Goſpel* is now ſo frequently and excluſively applied? We find JESUS himſelf telling us, LUKE xix. 10, that "he came to ſeek and to *ſave* that which was *loſt*." Were the *elect* loſt? or was JESUS ſent to *reprobates?* Theſe jarring appearances need reconciliation, and it lies upon the admirers of the Calviniſtic view to attempt it; and to ſuch I leave it.

In page 132, I am ſorry to find a ſtrange confuſion made between the Jewiſh and Chriſtian law, (conſidered as furniſhing a rule for moral conduct) as if, in this reſpect, they eſſentially differed from each other. The *moral law*, which you diſtinguiſh from the *Goſpel*, on the idea of its being inconſiſtent with it; "having (as you ſay) nothing to do with a ſinner's pardon and acceptance with GOD;" is called, in Romans viii. 7, "*the law of* GOD." And in Galatians vi. 2, "the law of CHRIST." In Hebrews vii. 12, we read that, upon the change of the prieſthood, there was alſo made "a *change* of the law," but no *abolition* of it. In the firſt chapter of ST. JAMES's epiſtle, the Apoſtle ſpeaks largely of that *perfect law of liberty*, as he calls it, which is to conſtitute the ſtandard of the Chriſtian's conduct. "Whoſo (ſays the Apoſtle) looketh unto the perfect

law of liberty, and *continueth therein*, he, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed." JAMES i. 25. It would be endleſs to quote paſſages from the Bible, which ſpeak the ſame language. Let it ſuffice to obſerve, that our Saviour, as he told the Jews, "came not to deſtroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them." He came to purge the former from its corruption, and reſtore it to its original purity, that it might be obeyed, not in the letter only, but alſo in the ſpirit. After having, therefore, well weighed the contents of that Divine ſermon, contained in the fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh chapters of ST. MATTHEW, with which our bleſſed LORD opened his public miniſtry, if you can think, that "obedience to the commandments of the *moral* law (I ſhould rather ſay *Chriſtian* law) has been totally excluded from having any thing to do in the buſineſs of a ſinner's pardon and acceptance;" you muſt read the Bible with eyes very different from thoſe with which I have been accuſtomed to read it. "The mercy of the LORD is from everlaſting unto everlaſting upon them that fear Him; and his righteouſneſs unto children's children, to ſuch as keep his covenant, and to thoſe that remember his commandments to do them." Pſalm

cüi. 17. 18. In a word, without taking up time to bring forward those passages in scripture, which must present themselves to every reader on this subject, the doctrine here alluded to, unguarded and unexplained as it is to be found in your book, appears to me to be not more erroneous, than it is dangerous.

In page 136, you seem to object to the phrase, "*doing our own duty*," as if it conveyed an idea incompatible with the Gospel. But, Sir, you will recollect, that such is the language of our excellent church; which, in its catechism, reminds the young disciple that he is to "do his duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call him." Every Christian then has a duty to perform: and I have always considered, that one great design of the Gospel being revealed was, that it might instruct him in the nature of that duty; by "teaching him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." Should therefore the Christian disciple, after having, through Divine assistance, performed his duty to the best of his power, look, in the character of an humble unprofitable servant, for salvation only through the merits of a crucified SAVIOUR; we cannot surely be said to preach "*a Christianity without a* CHRIST:"

and therefore what you ſay, in page 136, calculated to leave that impreſſion upon the reader's mind, to the diſcredit of the preſent clergy, appears to me, I am ſorry to ſay, to be neither conſiſtent with truth or charity.

I proceed to page 165; and after having duly weighed in my mind the "*trinam conſiderationem*," pointed out to my particular attention, I really do not find myſelf obnoxious to your cenſure. It appears to me, that the authority of the Apoſtle has been applied to a caſe, to which it does not belong. The doctrine of *expediency* comes, as I conceive, under the head of *diſcretion*, and applies to ſubjects of *prudential conſideration*, not to thoſe of *poſitive duty*. "In a buſineſs of expediency, we ſhould certainly take along with us a due regard to times, places, perſons, and circumſtances." What, under certain circumſtances, might be moſt proper and expedient to be done, might, under different circumſtances, be moſt improper and inexpedient. But in ſuch caſes the action muſt be of ſuch a nature, that the value of it is, in a great degree, to be determined by its due accommodation to time and circumſtances. But in caſes of *poſitive duty* we are not left to the exerciſe of diſcretionary judgment; becauſe the plain

line of conduct has been marked out. In ſuch caſes, the queſtions, *an liceat*, *an deceat*, *an expediat*, which ſavour more of worldly wiſdom than of Chriſtian obligation, are not ſo proper to be aſked, as that plain ſimple queſtion, propoſed by our Saviour, "what ſaith the law, how readeſt thou?" The ſolution of this plain queſtion puts the doubting Chriſtian upon ſure ground, by convincing him that times and circumſtances are to be accommodated to *imperious duty*, not *imperious duty to them*. The conſideration which you have recommended, appears therefore more applicable to your caſe than mine. The zeal which you have manifeſted on this occaſion would, it is preſumed, have loſt nothing of its value, by being accompanied with diſcretion and charity. But in writing my book, I conceive myſelf to have been acting ſtrictly within the line of profeſſional duty. The charge delivered to TIMOTHY virtually applies to every miniſter of the Chriſtian church—"I charge thee, therefore, before GOD and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom, preach the word; be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine. For the time will come, when they will not endure ſound

doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things; endure afflictions; do the work of an Evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry." 2 TIM. iv. 1, &c. No qualifying clauses, calculated to make ministers of CHRIST time-servers and men-pleasers, rather than faithful fulfillers of their trust, are to be found in the foregoing passage. SAINT PAUL's charge places the duty of CHRIST's minister plainly and authoritatively before him; and that minister who shrinks from it, must have forgotten his Master's awful words—"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of GOD." LUKE ix. 62.

Moreover, the ground upon which your doctrine of *expediency* is built, namely, the regard proper to be paid to times and circumstances, when generally applied, is in itself unsound. Times and circumstances may be such as to require a more strenuous exertion of duty for the preservation of truth, rather than any qualification of it in compliment to prevailing error: and such I conceive the present times and circumstances to be; when, in consequence

of the generally prevailing ignorance in eccleſiaſtical matters, the conſtitution of the church is diſregarded, and its Divinely-eſtabliſhed order trampled under foot; when ſchiſm is conſidered as no ſin, and is even promoted by thoſe who call themſelves *ſteady* members of the church; when the people are turning away from the regularly-appointed ſtewards of the Divine myſteries, and "of their own luſts, heaping to themſelves teachers, having itching ears."

"The temper of the age (you ſay) is by no means calculated to liſten to an extreme of eccleſiaſtical partiality." The temper of the preſent age is by no means favourable to eſtabliſhments of any kind. But this, Sir, is a temper to be *lamented*, not to be *humoured*. It is a temper which muſt be corrected by ſound and wholeſome doctrine, *or this nation is undone*. The honeſt phyſician adapts his preſcription, not to the vitiated palate of the patient, but to the nature of his diſeaſe.

The compariſon you have thought proper to make between Papal Rome, and the eſtabliſhed church of this country, appears totally foreign to the ſubject. The maintenance of the Divinely-eſtabliſhed conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, and the endeavour to prevent an unlawful ſeparation from it, are ſubjects

which bear no more affinity to Popery, than do the regular Acts of the Britiſh Parliament to the deſpotic decrees of the French Directory. Sorry am I, therefore, that you ſhould deſcend to give countenance to a ſenſeleſs cry, calculated only *ad captandum vulgus*; and which has been ſo often brought forward in this kingdom, as a convenient ſubſtitute for ſound argument and rational conviction.

You are much afraid (you ſay) that the doctrine contained in the *Guide to the Church*, "ſo far from tending to conciliate at this alarming criſis, is more likely to irritate and diſguſt." The doctrine of conciliation muſt always be welcome to a miniſter of the Goſpel of Peace. At the ſame time, it is to be remembered, that it is a doctrine not to be enforced at the expence of truth. "*Amicus* PLATO, *amicus* SOCRATES; *ſed magis amica veritas.*" The Apoſtle has forewarned us, that the time ſhould come, when Chriſtians would not endure ſound doctrine: but ſo far from forbidding miniſters to preach it on that account, he charges them, in the perſon of TIMOTHY, to make full proof of their miniſtry, by preaching it with more earneſtneſs and long-ſuffering. The kingdom of CHRIST "is not of this world:" the leſs the concerns of this world are mixed up with it, the better. To ſacrifice,

therefore, the eſtabliſhment of the church to what may be deemed the ſecurity of the ſtate, under the plauſible idea of conciliaton, would not be *political wiſdom* but *political weakneſs*, and muſt eventually terminate in the deſtruction of both. My book was written for the expreſs purpoſe of maintaining the conſtitution of that church of which I am a miniſter, at a time when the love of many towards it is waxen cold. Your book, written by a perſon who calls himſelf a *ſteady* member of the ſame church, under the idea, it ſhall be admitted, of promoting the cauſe of true religion, is calculated, if I underſtand it rightly, by ſetting Chriſtians looſe from the eſtabliſhed order and government of that church, to undermine and deſtroy it. Allow me, Sir, to call upon your cool judgment to determine, to which of theſe two caſes your threefold conſideration, "*an liceat, an deceat, an expediat*," does moſt properly apply?"

In page 167, ſpeaking of the evangelical plan of Divine grace, you obſerve, that "it is by its *ſecret, peculiar*, and *efficacious operations alone*, that we can ever become the living members of the church." We are both, it is preſumed, perfectly agreed, that without the Spirit of GOD no man can become a Chriſtian; or, if you pleaſe, "a living member of the church."

But there is not, I conceive, a more dangerous delusion than to rely on the *ſecret* and *peculiar* operations of Divine grace, whilſt we neglect to make uſe of the means appointed by CHRIST to convey it. Outward means of grace had never been inſtituted by an all-wiſe Being, who does nothing in vain, if the effect to be produced by their uſe could in ordinary caſes have been as well procured without them. There is no part of ſcripture which warrants this viſionary idea. The grace of GOD, we are there taught to expect, in the regular uſe of the appointed means, but not without them. Only thoſe who looked on the brazen ſerpent were healed. NAAMAN had never been cleanſed, had he not, in compliance with the Prophet's direction, waſhed ſeven times in Jordan. Baptiſm is called the door, becauſe it is the way appointed by CHRIST for us to become members of the church; our being *living* members of it depends upon our making a regular and due uſe of thoſe means of grace, with which the miniſtry of that church was appointed to furniſh us. The deſcription of the primitive church is this: the members, having been introduced into it by baptiſm, continued ſtedfaſtly in the Apoſtles' doctrine and fellowſhip, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, as the regular means of their

becoming what the Goſpel of CHRIST was deſigned to make them. Acts ii. 41, 42. This looking for *ſecret* and *peculiar* operations of Divine grace, independent of the uſe of the regular and appointed means, has, I fear, opened the door to more deception on the ſubject of true religion, than you, as a pious man, are well aware of. It is a doctrine, which, if traced to its ſource, will be found to ſpring (too often, it is to be feared) from that fatal root of pride which threw the angels out of heaven, and which will effectually bar all entrance into it. Pride joined with human learning, cauſes men to deny every doctrine which their finite underſtandings cannot fully comprehend, and leads to Unitarianiſm, Deiſm, and Atheiſm. Pride joined with ignorance, and a warm imagination, cauſes men to deſpiſe all human learning, and ſometimes even the ordinances and word of GOD, and leads to enthuſiaſm, deluſion, and madneſs. Whilſt the humble Chriſtian, ſenſible of his own weakneſs, relying on the merits of his SAVIOUR, and continuing ſtedfaſtly in the uſe of thoſe means which he has appointed for the attainment of Divine grace, is thereby guided ſafely in the way that leadeth unto life.

And now, on taking once more a general review of your publication, there does not appear to me to

be any thing of importance which has not received ſome anſwer, written, I truſt, in ſuch a ſtyle and temper, as neither to offend you, nor diſgrace myſelf.

Should we unhappily ſtill differ, I truſt you will at leaſt do me the juſtice to think that I write from principle and ſettled conviction, and not haſtily conclude, (becauſe I ſee ſome things in a different point of view from that in which they appear to you) that I muſt be a diſhoneſt man. A great part of your book proceeds on the poſition, that the *Calviniſtic* doctrine is the eſtabliſhed doctrine of the church of England. But as this poſition is rather taken for granted by you than proved, I feel myſelf at liberty to reject it, provided I do it upon what appears to me concluſive evidence. That evidence has been fairly brought before you in the courſe of the foregoing letters: it is evidence, I flatter myſelf, which no Calviniſt will ever ſucceed in his attempt to invalidate.

Confirmed, however, in my own opinion on this as well as other ſubjects treated in my book, I at the ſame time feel (thank GOD) no portion of that *odium theologicum*, the greateſt diſgrace of Chriſtian divines, which leads them, in unguarded moments, to ſpeak harſhly or diſreſpectfully of thoſe who may happen to diſſent from them on ſpeculative points. The great

fundamental doctrines of the croſs have been both ſincerely believed, and fully taught, by the moſt learned and pious men in different ages of the church, who never conſidered that particular doctrine, for which you are ſo warm an advocate, as conſtituting any part of the Divine counſel. Thoſe pious and learned men who have thought with you on this ſubject, admitting them to be in error, are entitled to reſpect; and I ſhould conſider myſelf to be moſt defective in Chriſtian charity, was I to withhold what is moſt certainly their due. My ſincere wiſh, in correſpondence with my duty, has been to write in defence of the church of CHRIST, not (according to the charge brought againſt me in the ſecond page of your publication) "*to give a ſtab to our excellent mother;*" bnt to maintain the cauſe of Chriſtian unity, as every miniſter of the church ought to do, without pronouncing judgment upon thoſe who offend againſt it. With this view I have thought it neceſſary to maintain *epiſcopal* government as eſſential to the conſtitution of the Chriſtian church. That it is the beſt form of government, may be inferred from its having not only the warrant of ſcripture for its inſtitution, but alſo the conſtant practice of the church for its continuance, from the days of the Apoſtles to the preſent time.

Strong, however, as the authority is on which this declaration is founded, I nevertheleſs do not take on myſelf to ſay, that the church may not ſubſiſt under any other form of government; but this I conceive to be a point for GOD, not man, to determine. Nor do I take upon me to aſſert, that the ſalvation of Chriſtian people depends *abſolutely* and *entirely* upon the lawful calling of their miniſters; for it was not the object of my book to enter into all the circumſtances that have taken, or may take place among Chriſtians in church matters: ſtill I do not ſcruple to ſay, according to the moſt decided judgment of the church from the beginning, that where a *valid miniſtry* is eſtabliſhed, of which advantage may be taken, it ought to become a matter of very ſerious and important conſideration with Chriſtians, how far any of the ordinances or ſacraments of religion can be *duly* and *effectually* adminiſtered without it. For altho' the definition of the church contained in our Articles was purpoſely leſs definitive than it might have been, with the view of giving the leaſt poſſible offence to thoſe whom our reformers wiſhed to reconcile; a moderation by which our church has rather loſt than gained; yet it muſt not from thence be concluded, that

eccleſiaſtical unity may be diſpenſed with; and that differences on that ſubject are matters of unimportant conſideration.

With theſe ſentiments before you, I truſt you will no longer think, that the moſt confirmed judgment with reſpect to the nature of the Chriſtian church, and the obligation all Chriſtians lie under to conform to it, is neceſſarily connected with an uncharitable diſpoſition towards thoſe, who think fit to ſeparate from it. To give Chriſtians right notions of the church, that, by underſtanding what is meant by *living in unity* and *godly love*, they may be diſpoſed to conform to the will of its Divine Founder, is, I conceive, one of the greateſt acts of charity that a Chriſtian miniſter can perform. Should he not ſucceed in his endeavours to promote the welfare of his fellow-Chriſtians, he ought at leaſt to have credit for his intention, and not be made anſwerable for conſequences which it is his profeſſed object to prevent. Many learned and wiſe men, from a want either of firmneſs of mind or deciſion of judgment, have been induced to palliate and ſoften doctrines which it was their duty earneſtly to maintain. Others there are, whoſe profeſſional abilities might qualify them to ſtem the tide

of prevailing error, who adopt a maxim unſanctioned either by the Goſpel or experience, that falſe opinions, if let alone, will die of themſelves. Theſe are patterns of diſcretion, after which I feel no wiſh to copy. The Bible has taught me, what it will teach every man who is diſpoſed to learn, that there can be no compromiſe between truth and error. If, therefore, the doctrine maintained in my book reſpecting the church, as a ſociety of CHRIST's framing, be *true*; the concluſions drawn from it muſt ſtand their ground, how unpalatable ſoever they may be to thoſe Chriſtians, who, "inſtead of drawing living water for the uſe of the ſanctuary from the freſh *ſprings of antiquity*, take up with ſuch as comes to them at ſecond or third hand from the *Lake of Geneva*."

The cauſe I have taken in hand, I am well aware is not a popular one. That weak and temporizing conduct, by which many of the cabinets of Europe have contributed to the ſucceſs of the deſolating ſyſtem of French policy, ſeems to be the conduct which is judged to be beſt ſuited to the preſent circumſtances of the church. The conſequence, it is to be feared, will be, that that deluge of ſectarianiſm which is now inundating our land on every ſide, will in the end ſweep away every barrier which the conſtitution of

this country has to oppoſe to its deſtructive progreſs. This idea, however, is not likely, at this time, to be generally adopted. The looſe habit of thinking, which conſtitutes one of the characteriſtics of the preſent day, muſt be unfavourable to an advocate for eſtabliſhed order. But that miniſter of the church who is not prepared to go through evil report, has undertaken an office for which he is unqualified. "If they have called the maſter of the houſe beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of his houſehold." MATT. x. 24, 25.

When I conſider what the church of England has been, and what ſhe now is, (to make uſe of the ſtrong language of a very great man) "like an oak, cleft to ſhivers with wedges made out of its own body," it is not without anxiety that I look forward. When I conſider, moreover, that the eſtabliſhed church of England, an undoubted branch of the church of CHRIST, furniſhes the beſt ſecurity for the preſervation both of Chriſtian doctrine and the peace and happineſs of my country; my earneſt prayer to GOD is, that ſhe may be reſtored to Apoſtolic purity. Should it, however, be the will of that Being who ruleth in all the kingdoms of the earth, that, in judgment for the deſertion of her profeſſing friends,

or the general unworthineſs of her members, the enemies of the church ſhall be permitted to lay her honour in the duſt, as a miniſter ſincerely attached to her cauſe, I feel no wiſh to ſurvive the fatal event.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c.

C. D.

FINIS.

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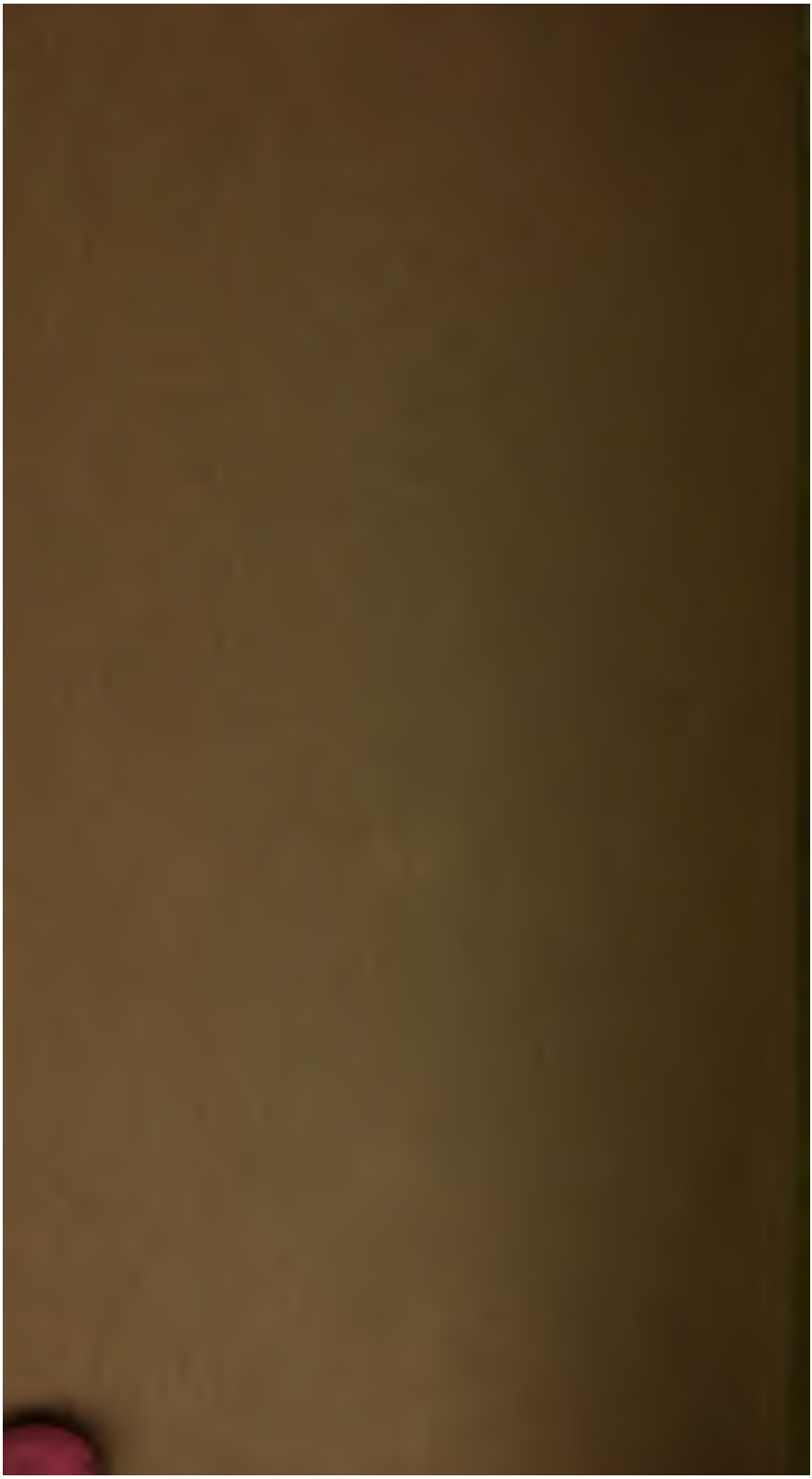
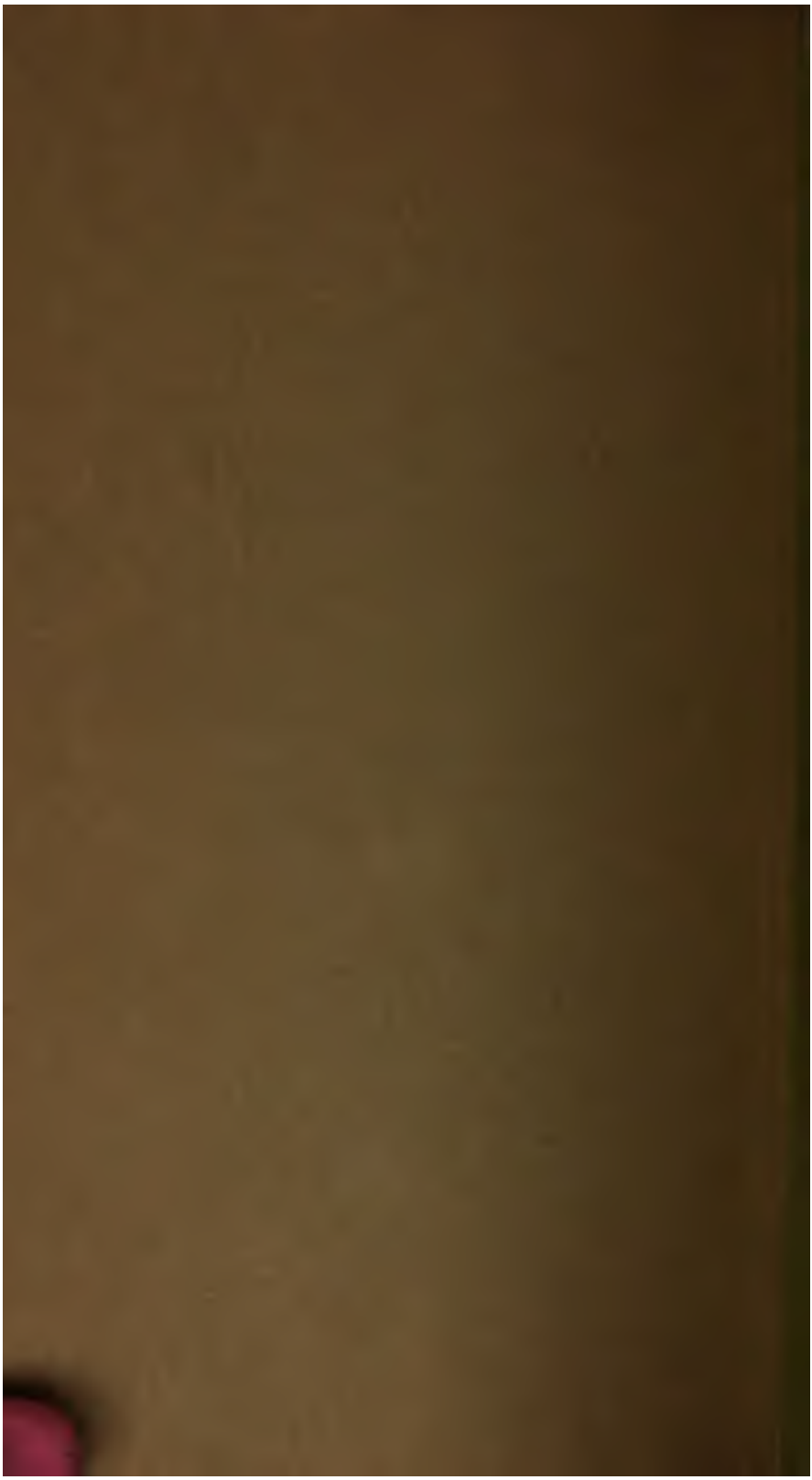
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